



Elgin  
Community  
College

# Performance Report

**Fiscal Year 2024**

(Academic Year 2023-2024)

**Submitted by**  
**The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness**  
**Elgin Community College**  
**District 509**

**September 2024**





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# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose

According to policy, the Elgin Community College Board of Trustees annually reviews key indicators or metrics that demonstrate progress in meeting ECC Strategic Plan goals. These indicators serve as guideposts to ensure that Elgin Community College (ECC), through its decisions and actions, remains accountable to its Mission of *improving people's lives through learning*.

The Performance Report is the college's annual summary of these indicators. Prepared at the end of each fiscal year, the Performance Report provides a high-level snapshot of how the college delivered its Mission during the prior year. Each indicator in the report aligns to a college goal. In turn, the college goals align to the key imperatives of the ECC Strategic Plan. The table below displays the alignments of these various components.

STRATEGIC PLAN KEY IMPERATIVES	COLLEGE GOALS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
 Teaching and Learning Excellence	Completion Mastery of Learning Outcomes	4-Year Completion/Transfer Rates General Education Learning Outcomes
 Lifelong Connections	Enrollment Credit Accumulation	Unduplicated Student Headcount Total Credit Hours Enrolled
 ECC Experience	Student Experience Employee Experience Community Experience	Student Satisfaction PACE Climate Survey Community Vibrancy
 Fortify Our Future	Student Affordability Institutional Financial Health College Fundraising Operational Efficiency	Average Non-loan Aid Awarded Budget Request Process Unrestricted Funds Raised Implement JIRA

## Goals and Performance Indicators

College goals are set each year by the President's Cabinet based on review of the prior year's performance. Goals are intended to account for any gaps and/or new opportunities noted during review. Using SMART Goal methodology, each college goal contains a current state or baseline; an intended target; a stretch goal that challenges us further; and a date by when the target is to be achieved. For example, for Goal 3 (Enrollment), the college's FY2024 Goal was to increase annual unduplicated enrollment from 13,840 students (baseline) to 14,206 (target) with a stretch goal of 14,5136 students (stretch goal) by April 1, 2024 (date).

To aid the college in deciding which goals to focus on, the college relies on performance indicators gathered by various ECC departments and offices; new metrics from outside agencies, such as Achieving the Dream (AtD); new higher education research; and mandates from state or federal regulatory agencies and accreditors. Goals selected as a priority in any given year often derive from these indicators, which sometimes foreshadow where future focus is needed.

## Structure of the Report

The college set 11 college goals in FY2024; thus, this Performance Report contains 11 sections, each summarizing progress made on one of these 11 goals. Each college goal lays out on two pages in printed form: our current progress, our past progress (where available), and key accomplishments or strategies that helped us fulfill the goal. The left-side page contains the current and past progress in visual form, usually with a chart or graph, along with written explanation beneath it. The right-side page contains accomplishments in the form of narrative descriptions. These accomplishments may or may not be directly related to a specific college goal; the examples are inclusive of all college activity including those that indirectly support a specific college goal or are in service of the broader Key Imperative definition.

## Audience and Feedback

Insights derived from discussion of the Performance Report guide leadership practices of the Board of Trustees and President. A formal review of the report takes place during the ECC Board's public Committee of the Whole meeting each October. Additionally, the Illinois Community College Board and the federal Higher Education Act (Student Right to Know legislation) require many of the indicators contained in this report to be filed annually. In 2022, the Illinois General Assembly passed legislation to require Elgin Community College and other Illinois colleges to solicit external feedback on accountability measures, and the Performance Report aids in compliance with this law. Finally, digital copies are made available to the public on the college's website.

Questions about this report, and ideas or comments about future indicators, may be forwarded to Philip Garber, PhD, Vice President of Planning, Institutional Effectiveness, and Technology at [pgarber@elgin.edu](mailto:pgarber@elgin.edu) or 847-214-7285.



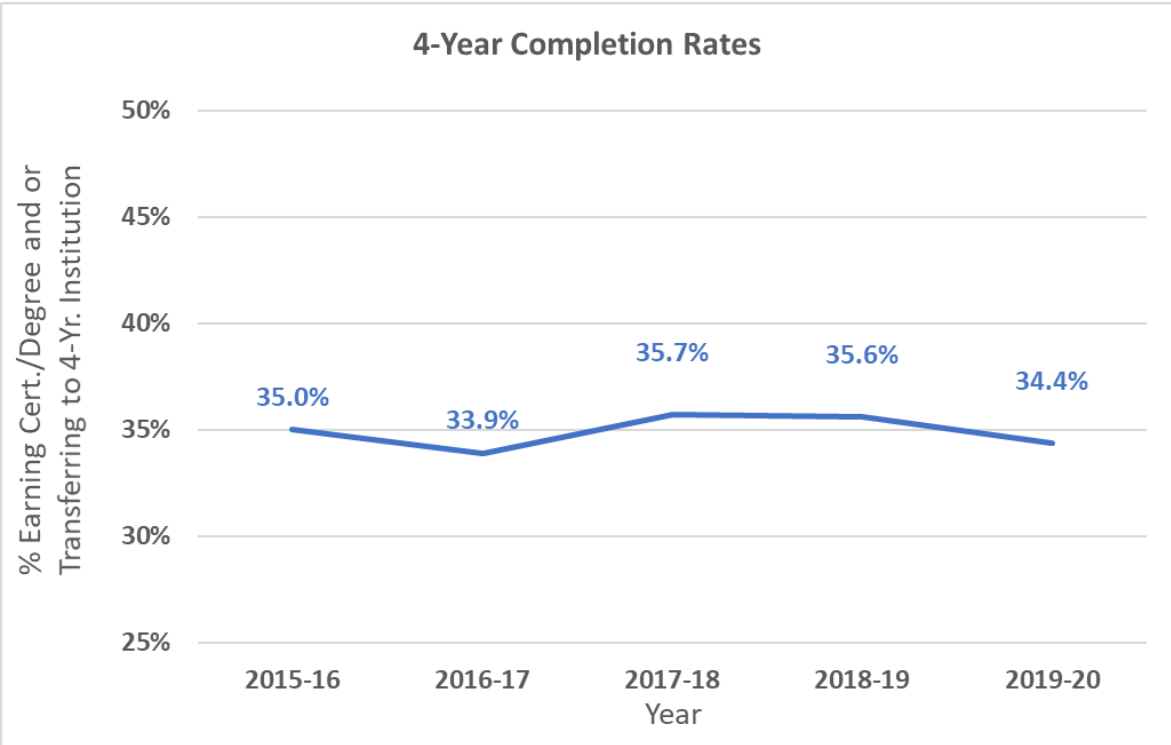
# TEACHING AND LEARNING EXCELLENCE

*Deliver instructional practices and curriculum to ensure student-centered learning.*

## GOAL 1: COMPLETION

**STATEMENT:** Increase the percentage of students who complete their programs from 35.6% to 38.2% with a stretch goal of 39.0% by June 30, 2024.

**OUTCOME: Target not achieved.** The final completion rate of 34.4% fell below the target of 38.2%.



(Source: Post-Secondary Data Partnership Tableau Site, as of June 1, 2024)

ECC’s four-year completion/transfer rate for students in the fall 2019 cohort was 34.4%, falling short of the target of 38.2%. However, this result aligns to historical trends noted in previous cohorts, where four-year completion/transfer rates consistently were in the mid-30% range. Historically, ECC has done well against other institutions; however, for this year, National Clearing House PDP dashboards show the national completion rate is also at 34.4%. Even so, using a lagging metric can be challenging. Moving forward, ECC has set an annualized goal for completion, so this report will be the last using a measure with a 4-year lagging horizon. Annualized completion also fits the strategies ECC has put in place to foster completion.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 1: Completion

### **Mentored 100 First-Time-in-College Black Students**

Launched Continuing the Legacy of African Ancestry Student Success, C.L.A.S.S., a high-touch mentoring program, on September 29, 2023. The program's expected outcomes are to increase student success metrics of retention/persistence and the ratio of attempted hours vs. completed hours for first-time-in-college Black students. Student participation grew over the academic year from 97 students in the fall to 105 in the spring. The 17 volunteer mentors represented Black ECC employees across administration, faculty, and staff.

### **Increased Basic Operations Firefighter Completion Percentage**

The number of students completing basic operations firefighter certification increased by 80% from last year and 394% since FY2021. Contributing strategies that support this gain include: increased social media presence for all programs at the Center for Emergency Services; increased internal/external marketing; elicited input from industry partners regarding their needs and strategies to provide the best practices for education and training; established an organic pathway to get into the career and assisted students with education progression. Additionally, a change made by the Office of the State Fire Marshal to allow more students to seek certification resulted in a change from spring 2022 enrollment of 116 students compared to the expected all-time high in fall 2024 with 287 students in the fire science program.

### **Implemented Student Feedback to Drive Changes in Phlebotomy**

The phlebotomy program continued to grow and new full-time faculty began teaching the didactic courses in spring 2024 following a "backward design" approach. Utilizing a fully-immersive laboratory environment, students are equipped with a full understanding of professional expectations and are exposed to different scenarios and patient situations providing opportunities to demonstrate technical skills. All students passed CLT 101 (Phlebotomy) compared to the class from the prior spring, when 6% did not pass. The majority (15 of 22) of phlebotomy students and all 18 medical assistant students completed clinical rotations; anxiety towards clinicals decreased; and many students are now receiving job offers. A new student feedback system was implemented asking students to anonymously respond to questions. Responses are shared with the program director and changes are routinely made.

### **Removed Barrier to Certification Testing Required for Completion**

The Testing Center added a new test type called Measure Learning to facilitate certification testing for medical billing and coding programs run through Continuing Education and Corporate Training. Access to the test on-site (as opposed to having to seek testing at a different location), removes a barrier for students taking this required test to complete the course. It also contributes to a positive experience, as students are able to complete the test with less coordination and in a way that is more familiar to them.



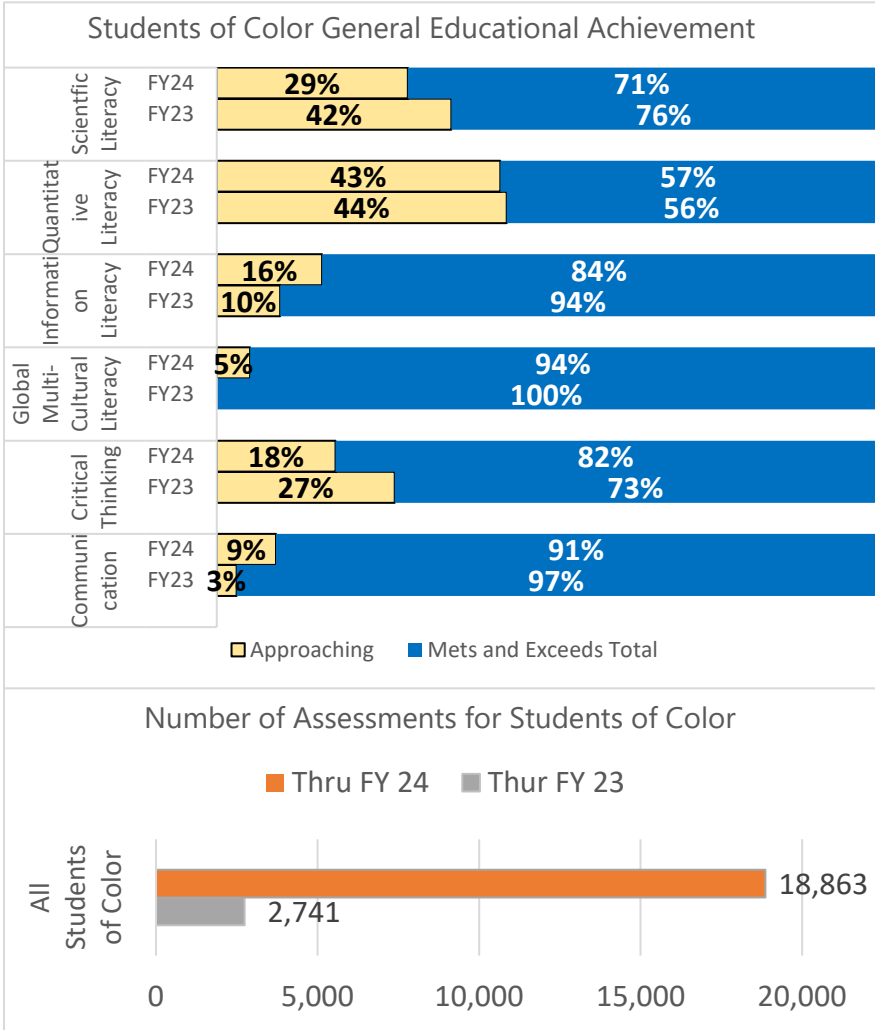
# TEACHING AND LEARNING EXCELLENCE

*Deliver instructional practices and curriculum to ensure student-centered learning.*

## GOAL 2: MASTERY OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

**STATEMENT:** Attain 80% average achievement among students of color in all general educational learning outcomes with a stretch goal of 90% by June 1, 2024.

**OUTCOME: Target partially achieved.** On target with critical thinking and information literacy; exceeding the target with communications and global/multicultural literacy; and not meeting the target with quantitative and scientific literacy.



The goal for FY2024 focused on the achievement of students of color in general educational learning outcomes.

Both the scientific and qualitative literacy outcomes remain below the desired 80% “meets or exceeds” combined threshold. The remaining four outcomes are 80% or higher.

The college’s assessment culture has continued to evolve as more faculty have taken on leadership roles in assessment cohorts and the number of student artifacts analyzed increased by 588% in the last year.

(Source: ECC Internal Assessment Data, as of July 30, 2024)

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 2: Mastery of Learning Outcomes

### Strengthened Assessment Data to Improve Learning

Assessment cohorts, as part of the Quality Initiative Proposal (QIP) with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), continued. Since inception in 2021 through the end of FY2024, a total of six faculty-led assessment cohorts have been on boarded; of those, three have been retired after four semesters. In fall 2023, to further support departments not currently involved in an assessment cohort, the cohort lead role was revised to serve as a liaison and resource for routine course assessment processes. Survey results from faculty that participated in an assessment cohort indicate the assessment process has been demystified and is well received.

### Purchased Instructional Equipment Allowing New Curriculum

The Sustainability, Business, and Career Technologies (SBCT) Division purchased over \$300K in instructional equipment to help advance the student learning experience. The off-grid solar array will prepare students to design, build, install, and maintain small solar array systems in the rapidly expanding, high-demand, renewable energy sector. The two mechatronics smart factory trainers allowed for the development of a new course, IST 250 (Introduction to Mechatronics), to be offered in October 2024. The course provides valuable hands-on education and training for high-skill in-demand jobs in our local community.

### Involved Students in Research, Presentations, National Symposiums and Publications

The 2023-24 academic year marked the second successful year with 14 fellows participating in the Center for Undergraduate Research, Innovation, and Creativity (CURIC), expanding to support STEM related projects. Of particular note, one CURIC fellow was chosen competitively (by those outside of ECC's institution) to present her research at the 2024 Richard Macksey National Undergraduate Humanities Research Symposium at John Hopkins University, a nationally well-regarded undergraduate research symposium. The fellow's work was published in their undergraduate research journal. ECC was one of only two community colleges who had students present at the symposium which also included student projects from Ivy League universities. The CURIC program demonstrates that ECC students, when provided the opportunity, excel on par with prestigious institutions.

### Developed the Incomplete Grade Agreement Form

Key stakeholders on campus, including faculty and student services representatives, identified a need for transparent communication about incomplete grades. The Incomplete Grade Agreement Form guides faculty and students through the process of incomplete grades and making up the work. If after 120 days the incomplete is not resolved, it becomes a grade of F. CETAL attached the form to both end-of-semester emails to faculty as a resource to be used on a voluntary basis. The form is new and voluntary, so it is uncertain how many have been used, but the number of "I" grades issued and their resolution status will be monitored.





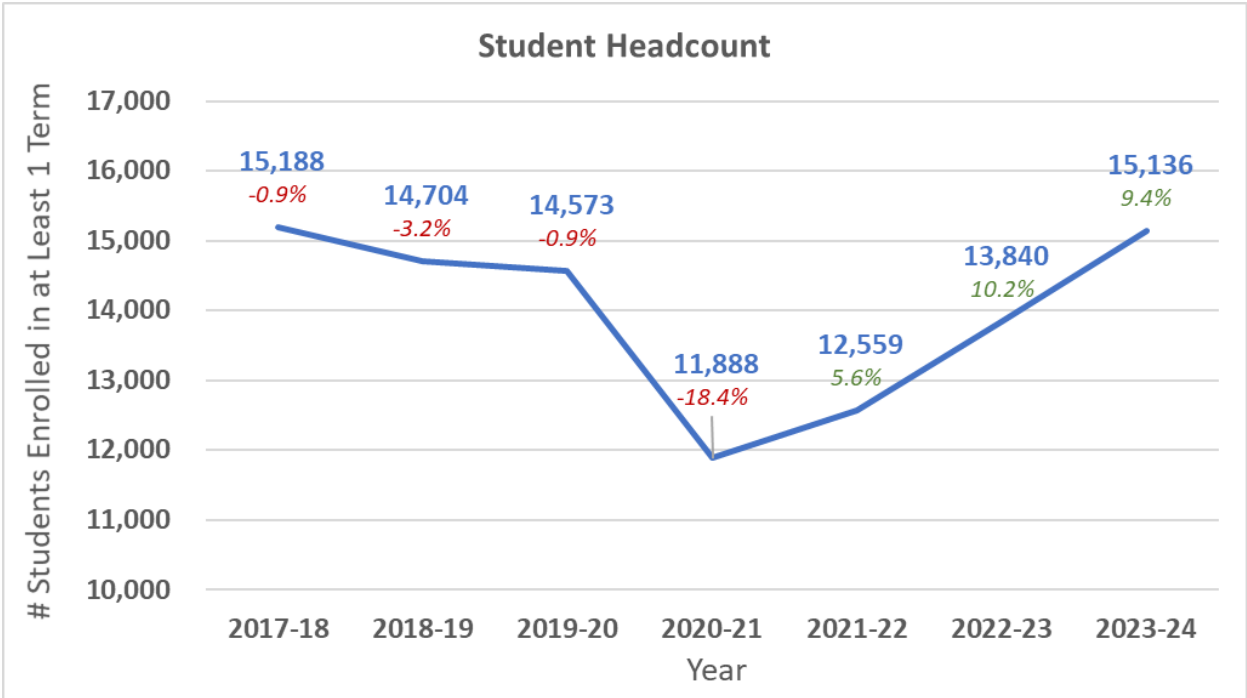
# LIFELONG CONNECTIONS

Create a lifelong meaningful, and mutual relationship with the college.

## GOAL 3: ENROLLMENT

**STATEMENT:** Increase annual unduplicated enrollment from 13,840 students to 14,206 students with a stretch goal of 14,571 students by April 1, 2024.

**OUTCOME: Stretch exceeded.** Total enrollment for FY2024 (AY23-24) reached 15,136 students, a return to pre-pandemic levels (AY19-20).



(Source: ICCB A1 Data Submissions, as of May 2, 2024)

After enrollment declined during the COVID-19 pandemic, headcounts have rebounded since the 2020-21 low. The FY2024 goal was to return to pre-pandemic levels; not only was the target achieved, but the stretch goal was exceeded with a 9.4% continued increase in student headcount of 15,136 almost tying 2017-18 enrollment. Reasons are largely due to an increase in Hispanic/Latinx enrollment and an increase in dual credit program enrollments.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 3: Enrollment

### **Revised Class Scheduling Process with Targeted Emphasis on Enrollment Growth**

The Liberal, Visual, and Performing Arts (LVPA) division established a consistent timeline for class schedule planning to guide the work of instructional coordinators and allow sufficient time for data analysis and refinement of initial plans, ensuring planning for the next “like” term is completed within that prior term. Additional scheduling improvements included deploying a more conservative approach with an initial plan wherein 16-week sections were prioritized, then 12-week, and then 8-week sections based on enrollment demand. This adjustment reduces the number of section cancellations and faculty reassignments. The division expanded its analytical tools to examine historical enrollment trend data to strengthen initial planning. Expanded two weekend and evening sections in the fall and spring semesters (ART, CDN, HUM). Piloted Friday and Saturday classes.

### **Became Preferred Destination for Emergency Services Education**

In November 2023, ECC opened the Municipal Training Academy which offers existing municipal professionals continuing educational opportunities alongside traditional first-time certificate or degree-seeking students. Through this strengthened partnership with area fire departments, EMS, and 911 providers, ECC is their “first stop” for any education, certification, and training needs. Both fall and spring semester enrollments increased from the previous like semester at 18% and 23% respectively.

### **Established Positive Beginning and Revamped Process to Keep in Touch with Graduates**

Part of creating lifelong relationships is establishing positive experiences early on and being able to maintain contact with ECC alumnae after graduation. In partnership with U46, 80 second-graders were invited to campus to see Communication Studies students perform stories written by the second-graders. The Alumni Network staff completely revamped the process for collecting information from upcoming graduates collecting over 300 information forms during Cap and Gown pickup and including a letter with the diplomas when mailed to encourage engagement.

### **Grew Dual Credit Student Enrollment by 39%**

The College Transitions and Secondary Partnership Division goal was to increase dual credit enrollment of unduplicated students by 10% (from 1,336 students in FY2023 to 1,470); the goal was exceeded with an enrollment of 1,853, representing a 39% increase, according to the division’s internal data. The division expanded dual credit offerings to 166 courses, a 47% increase from the previous year, by working with the Alliance for College and Career Student Success to identify high-priority courses as well as partnering with schools for outreach to parents to encourage their students to take ECC courses.



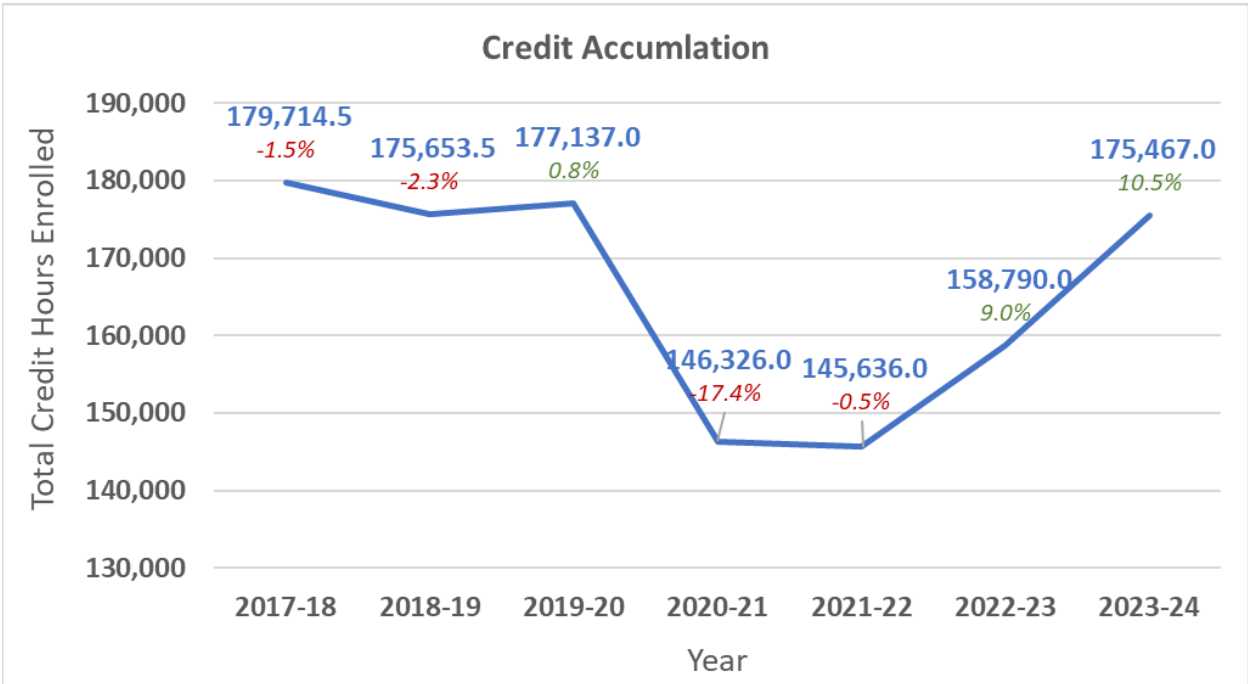
# LIFELONG CONNECTIONS

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## GOAL 4: CREDIT ACCUMULATION

**STATEMENT:** Increase the total annual credit hour count from 158,790 to 167,964 with a stretch goal of 177,137 by June 30, 2024.

**OUTCOME: Target exceeded.** Total credit hour count of 175,467.



(Source: ICCB SRSU Data Submission as of May 23, 2024)

In FY2024, for the second year in a row, the total credit hours enrolled increased. The current increase of 10.5% exceeded the target of 167,964 by over 7,500 credit hours to reach a total of 175,467. Relatedly, the college finds the average number of credits attempted by each student has been declining since the pandemic despite the enrollment and credit hour increases as reported here. In 2020-21, students enrolled on average in 12.3 credit hours for the year; in 2022-23, it declined to 11.5; and this decline persisted into 2023-24 with an average of 11.6. While students are indeed returning to ECC post-pandemic, as illustrated in Goal 3, they are still taking the reduced course loads observed during the pandemic.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 4: Credit Accumulation

### **Achieved Increase in High School Student Dual Credit Completion**

From the previous to the current academic year, high school students increased the number of completed dual credits by 12.87% (from 13,507 to 15,246). This represents a 93% successful completion rate of credits attempted (completed 15,246 of 16,464 attempted) in 2023-24.

### **Created Teaching Interventions to Improve Student Success**

Through the assessment cohorts that are part of the Advancing Equity Through the Assessment of Student Learning QIP, teaching interventions have been created to further students' mastery of course materials and to positively impact course completion and credit accumulation. Examples of interventions include embedding tutors into targeted courses (in which students benefit from extra attention in specialized topics) and revising course assignments to make the purpose and criteria for success more transparent.

### **Identified a Dedicated Apprentice Advisor**

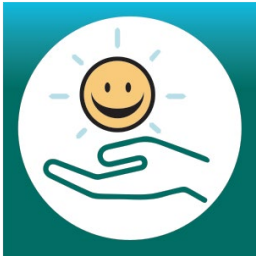
In partnership with Academic Advising, the Strategic Partnerships and Experiential Learning Department identified a dedicated apprentice advisor. This role will: help apprenticeship coordinators track and manage student schedules and course plans; ensure placement tests are completed and evaluated correctly with timely results to guide course selection; address pre-requisites and course substitutions, which are sometimes needed for apprentices due to employer course requests; and provide clarity around each student's course plan to maximize the number of credits an apprentice is taking each semester.

### **Developed Robust Case Management for Interns and Apprentices**

A 5-Touch Case Management strategy was developed. The apprenticeship coordinator will conduct 5 checks with apprentices during each semester: pre-term, first week, mid-term, finals, and post-term. The purpose is to uncover any academic concerns, barriers to success, or life updates to address. An added benefit is a closer relationship between apprenticeship coordinators and apprentices to address attrition. The strategy will be used in FY2025 with 54 apprentices in fall 2024.

### **Provided After-Hours Crisis Counseling Resource**

Wellness Services encourages students to participate in their overall health and well-being. Some of the most pressing concerns on campus include anxiety, emotional support, relationships, academic difficulty, and depression. To maintain compliance with the Early Mental Health on Campus Action Act, ECC partnered with UWill to provide after-hours crisis counseling to students, as opposed to referring them elsewhere (a prior approach that ECC has discontinued). Students are referred back to an ECC wellness professional for follow-up. UWill is another resource for students offered by ECC in addition to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, crisis text line, AID crisis line of Fox Valley, and the Elgin Community Crisis Center.



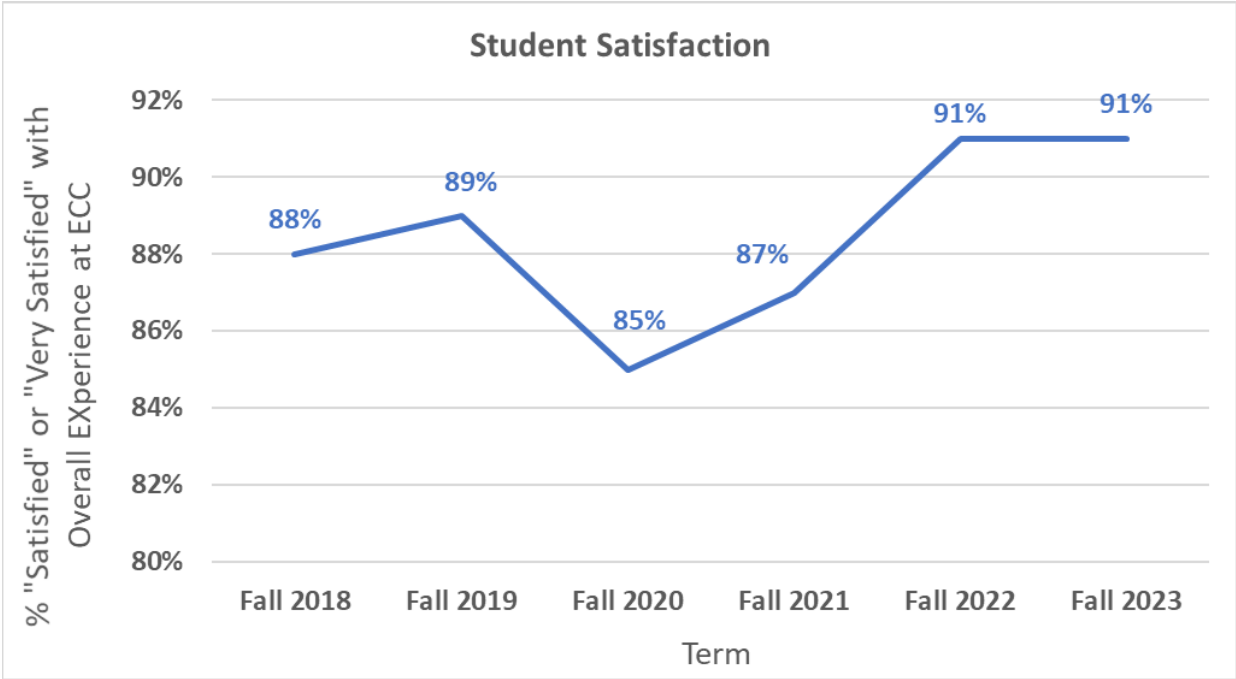
# ECC EXPERIENCE

*Cultivate a welcoming destination for students, employees, and our community.*

## GOAL 5: STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**STATEMENT:** Increase the percentage of students responding “very satisfied” or “satisfied” to a question about overall satisfaction on the fall 2023 administration of the Current Student Survey from 91% to 93% with a stretch goal of 94% by December 18, 2023.

**OUTCOME: Target not achieved.** The baseline of 91% was maintained, falling short of the 93% target.



(Source: Annual ECC Current Student Survey, as of June 1, 2024 [unweighted])

The college’s Current Student Survey is administered every fall semester. Students responding to the survey have consistently expressed very high levels of satisfaction with their experience. The lowest rating was gathered during the Covid-19 pandemic, with 85% of students rating themselves as “satisfied” or “very satisfied”. Since then, overall satisfaction has increased, reaching its highest rate of 91% last year (even surpassing pre-pandemic levels). This high rate of 91% overall satisfaction was maintained in FY2024. Despite not achieving the target set in the annual goal, maintaining this high level of satisfaction is quite good in and of itself.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 5: Student Experience

### **Introduced MyECC Experience Mobile Application**

The student-centered MyECC Experience App launched in October 2023. There were 93,157 hits; 1,639 user registrations; and 1,949 active users. A high percentage of users, 64.5%, were very active (more than once a day) or active (once a day) in their usage. The top five menu items students accessed, in order, were: My Schedule, ECC Gmail, ID Cards, Campus Life, and Campus Info. The app allows students to explore, attend, and provide feedback on campus activities and receive text reminders. This is an efficiency over paper flyers, emails, or other methods.

### **Improved Academic Support Services Based on Student Feedback**

In spring 2024, a new academic support services student satisfaction survey launched which offered a more consistent and reliable method to collect student feedback (previously physical comment cards were hardly used). The survey was integrated into the ECC scheduling platform so students would get the survey via email after every Tutoring Center visit. Over 100 responses were received. Based on the feedback, action was taken quickly. Students mentioned tutors by name, allowing both positive reinforcement as well as areas to work on based directly on student interactions. Signage was improved to make services easier to locate. Encouraged campus partners to give academic support services face-time in the classroom to build student awareness.

### **Launched the Center for Civic Engagement**

The Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) officially launched with 15 student applicants and six student Civic Leaders appointed, which eventually increased to eight. Student Civic Leaders: met state and local government officials; attended Illinois state legislature session; toured both the Illinois State Capitol and Senate; organized, promoted, and led a panel discussion and facilitated direct conversations on important student issues between county, local elected officials, and students; designed and executed a voter registration and education campaign registering over 100 student voters, while also coordinating and promoting early voting on campus for students, faculty, and staff; designed and analyzed two original surveys presenting their research in a formal academic setting at the Midwest Political Science Association Conference in Chicago.

### **Created Positive Interactions Between Police and Students**

The ECC Police Department participated in several student engagement events. At convocation, officers shared information about their services and demonstrated the equipment, students got to try on the ballistic vest and shield and have their photo taken. At the Pancakes with the Po-Po event, 90 attendees talked to ECC and Elgin police and enjoyed free pancakes. The annual Drunk Busters event aimed to educate students about the dangers of driving under the influence and also substance abuse. Approximately 90 students wore impairment goggles, drove through a course while being evaluated by an officer, and then took a field sobriety test with another officer. Upon completion, students were awarded donuts.



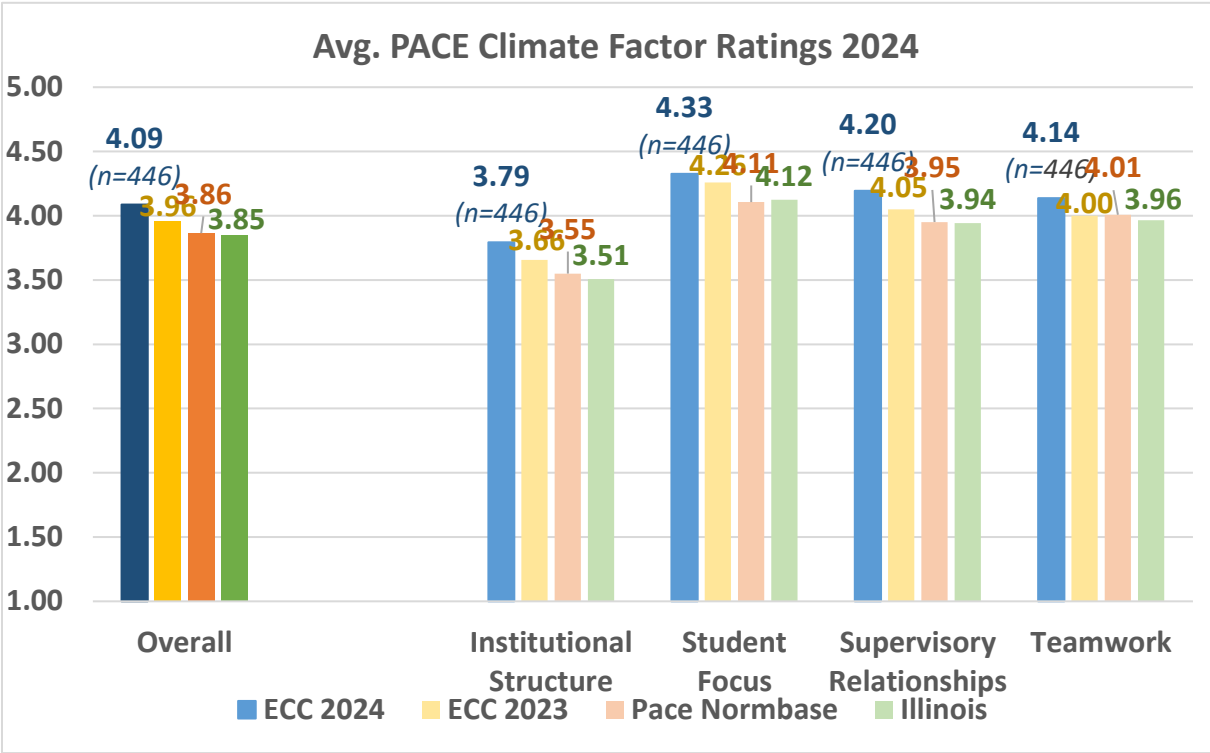
# ECC EXPERIENCE

Cultivate a welcoming destination for students, employees, and our community.

## GOAL 6: EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

**STATEMENT:** Maintain an overall mean of 3.956 with a stretch goal of 4.030 as measured by the PACE Campus Climate Survey administered in spring 2024.

**OUTCOME: Stretch exceeded.** The ECC overall mean satisfaction rating of 4.087 exceeds the stretch goal by +0.057.



(Source: PACE Employee Survey Aggregate Results, as of February 2024)

Due to very high levels of satisfaction among employees on the inaugural PACE Campus Climate Survey, for the second annual survey in FY2024, ECC set a target to maintain the score of 3.956 out of 5.0 with a stretch goal of 4.030, the smallest statistically significant improvement above the target which would indicate real change and not the normal fluctuation expected in survey research. The stretch goal was exceeded by +0.057 with a score of 4.087 overall. ECC’s mean scores are higher across all climate factors compared to the three comparison groups: ECC 2023 (the college’s historical data); PACE Normbase (all colleges using the PACE survey); Illinois (colleges in Illinois).

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 6: Employee Experience

### **Changed Compensation Calculation for New Hires to Address Feedback and Needs**

Previously, new hire salary offers were at the salary range base irrespective of experience. Changing to a structured offer calculation process ensures fair and competitive salaries for new hires taking into consideration the work and educational experience against the minimum requirements to establish the appropriate salary range. Offers close to the minimum salary are avoided unless the candidate has a substantial learning curve. The same evaluation process is applied to current employees to ensure fairness.

### **Provided Opportunity for Advisors to Increase Understanding and Awareness**

Sustainability, Business, and Career Technologies (SBCT), in collaboration with Student Services Division (SSD) held information sessions and program tours for recruitment coordinators and advisors across a variety of disciplines, including HVAC and Welding. In order to better serve students, staff need to be familiar with and have connections to the faculty, curriculum, and the physical space in which CTE students learn.

### **Expanded Academic Advisors' Knowledge of Transfer Requirements**

Based on the Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) survey result of 76% satisfaction with student perception of advisor knowledge of transfer requirements, Academic Advising partnered with Transfer Services to expand advisors' knowledge and understanding of the transfer resources available to share with students. Twenty-four participants attended 11 different off-campus opportunities (articulation conferences, campus visits, etc.). A student survey administered in spring 2024, indicated that 93% of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" with a replica of the RNL survey question "My academic advisor is knowledgeable about the transfer requirements."

### **Rolled Out LinkedIn Learning Service Resource Campus Wide**

A cross-departmental effort between the Library and Professional and Organizational Development brought a single LinkedIn Learning account to ECC (instead of individual departments holding their own licenses) providing development and education resources to employees and students as well as reaching a larger number of users. Access began to roll out in January 2024, in the first six months 474 seats were activated.

### **Generated New Relationships with DOE Eligibility Programs as Hiring Source**

In an effort to increase the number of diverse, qualified candidates in the hiring pool for full-time faculty positions in English, Psychology, and Communications, the Communications and Behavioral Sciences Division (CABS) aimed to create a partnership with Department of Education Eligible programs and those with HBCU, HSI, and other designations, as a hiring source. In the short-term, reaching out to establish contact with personnel to begin sharing upcoming hiring opportunities and to showcase community college instruction. These connections are just in the beginning stages and the first steps in a long-term relationship building strategy.





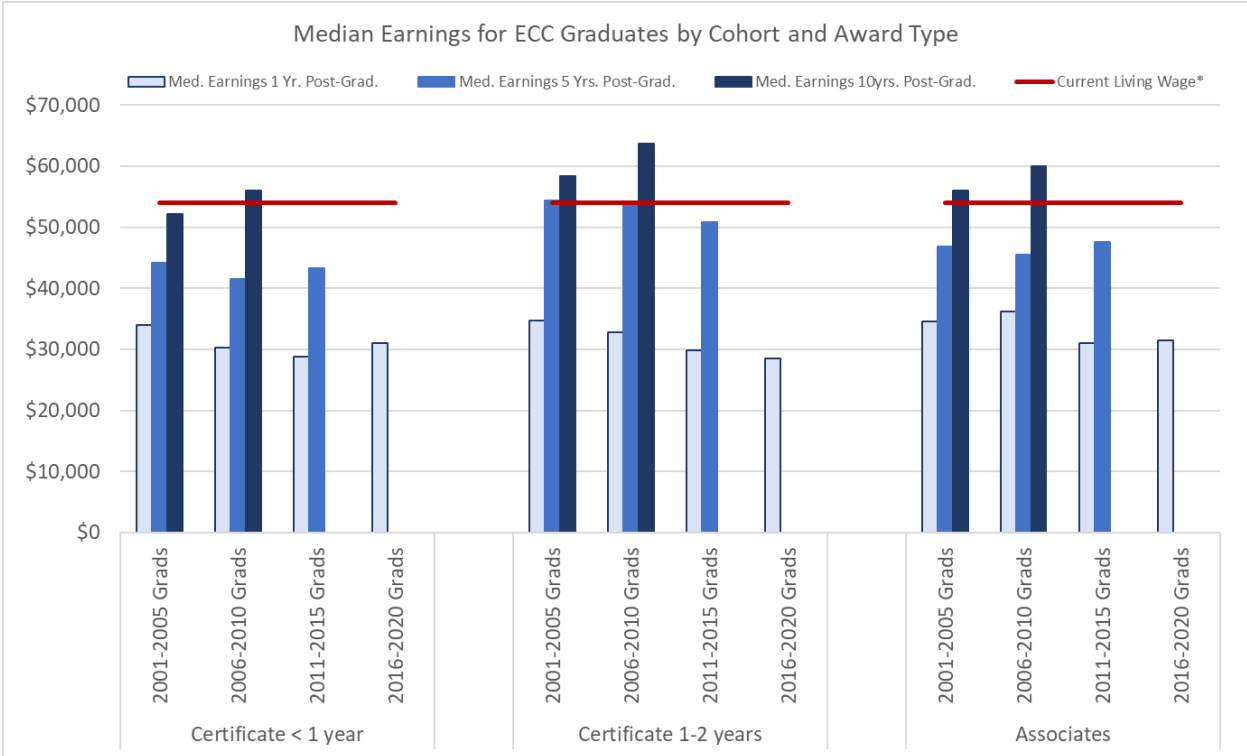
# ECC EXPERIENCE

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## GOAL 7: COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

**STATEMENT:** Implement Community Vibrancy metrics to collect baseline data for FY2025 goal setting with a stretch goal of communicating baseline data to key external stakeholders by June 30, 2024.

**OUTCOME: Target achieved.** Stretch goal not achieved, communicated to some stakeholders.



(Source: Census’s Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes website; \* all amounts in 2021-adjusted dollars)

The AtD Community Vibrancy cohort helped identify many potential metrics that community colleges *could* consider as indicators of long-term impact on students and their respective communities. However, there was no consensus as to which particular metrics should be used. AtD received grant funding for another 3 years to identify community impact metrics. One potential metric highlighted was post-graduate earnings. Data from the Census’s Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes (PSEO) tool recently added Illinois graduate data to national data from other participating states. According to the Census website, the PSEO “...provide[s] earnings and employment outcomes...[for] graduates by degree level, major, and...institution.”

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 7: Community Experience

### Amplified Visibility with Community Businesses

The Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at ECC onboarded more than 224 new community business clients through several activities: hosted three major events; commenced monthly Starting Your Business in Illinois classes; and presented at five community events. For this period, 80% of the clients (127/158) who were provided one-on-one advising were from underserved communities. Intentional steps were taken to support Spanish-speaking small business advising by hiring bilingual staff and producing business support materials in Spanish.

### Measured Impact of Attending Community Events

Workforce Development set two divisional goals related to community events: staff to attend two events a month and to determine the impact of attending. The target was exceeded, over 100 community events were attended by staff resulting in numerous connections being made across the college, Foundation, and educational departments. A post-event form was created to capture impact and make suggestions for future attendance.

### Celebrated ECC 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The college's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary was on January 10, 2024, inspiring a year-long celebration across campus with students, employees, and the community. Special events included: variety show with over 20 performers showcasing ECC's talented and creative staff and Board in front of an audience of approximately 150; birthday party event with several hundred attendees; new 276-page book that was designed and printed to recap 75 years at ECC; Athletic Spirit Night; and Sensational 75 Brunch, just to name a few.

### Surged Engagement at the Annual Enrollment Open House

The largest enrollment and recruitment event of the year, Experience ECC 2024, saw a 63.9% increase in event registration (from 205 to 336) compared to last year and a 16.7% increase in attendees (from 300 to over 350). Over 50 academic programs and student service programs participated, each meeting with students and their families to discuss programs of interest and to learn about available resources and services. Guidance on the application and enrollment process was provided. There were 11 campus tours showcasing Health Professions, Culinary Arts, Career and Technical Education, and Visual and Performing Art. Of the event attendees intending to enroll, 84% planned to for 2024-25.

### Boosted Athletic Department's Number of Social Media Followers

The percentage of followers on the Athletic social media platforms increased in FY2024 compared to the previous year: Facebook 33% (from 764 to 933); Instagram 18% (538 to 635); and X (formerly Twitter) 22.2% (522-638). The greatest increases in the number of followers occurred in the fall. More followers led to more engagement, which contributed to both ECC and the athletic programs receiving more attention.



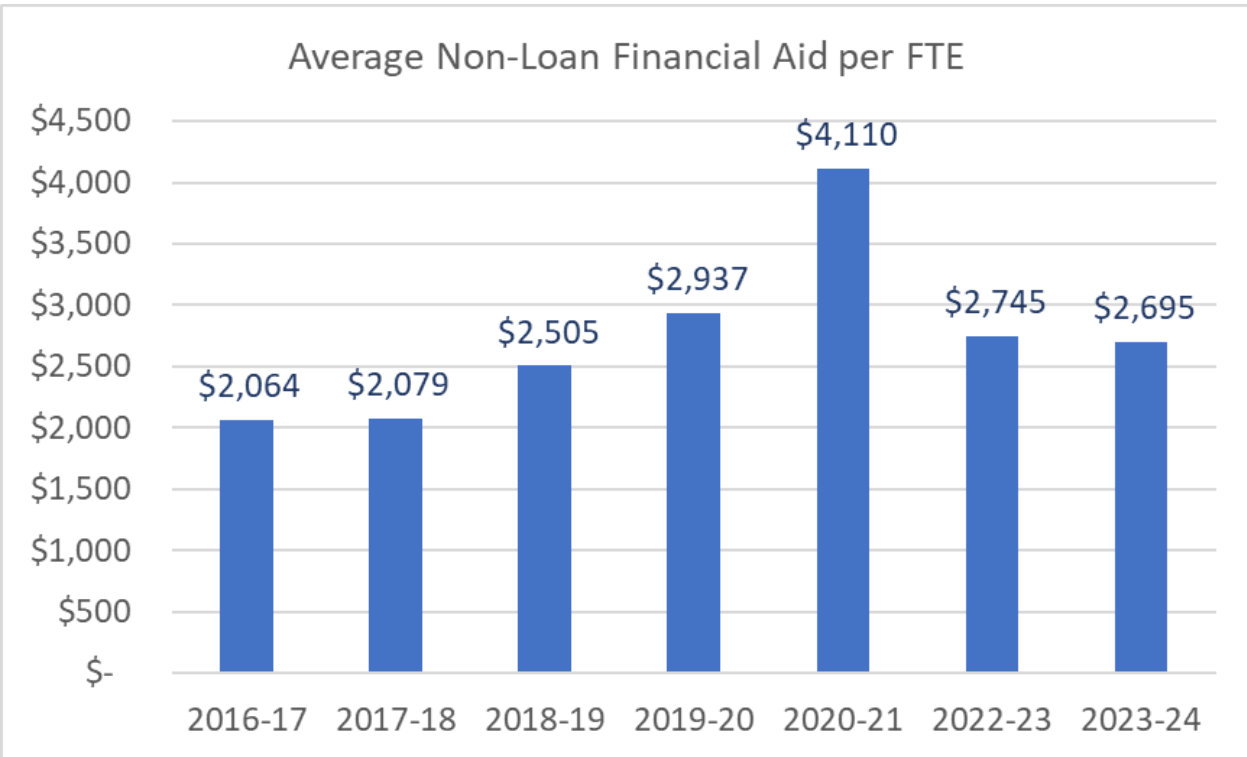
# FORTIFY OUR FUTURE

Position the college to remain affordable while ensuring long-term financial stability and operational efficiency.

## GOAL 8: STUDENT AFFORDABILITY

**STATEMENT:** Increase the average non-loan aid to student aid recipients (standardized to FTE) from \$2,745 to \$2,882 with a stretch goal of \$3,020 by June 30, 2024.

**OUTCOME: Target not achieved.** The average non-loan aid award to students was \$2,695 falling below the baseline of \$2,745.



(Source: ECC Internal Financial Aid Data as of June 1, 2024)

The average non-loan aid to student aid recipients was a new focus in FY2024. During the pandemic, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allotted funding known as the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) to postsecondary education institutions. At the end of 2019-20, ECC received and dispersed these funds to students, increasing their average non-loan aid. The final funds were dispersed at the start of 2022-23, and as the most recent year, this amount was used as the baseline. This figure is influenced by HEERF funds. In hindsight, a more appropriate baseline, without the influence of HEERF, would have been the \$2,505 in 2018-19, which was exceeded in FY2024.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 8: Student Affordability

### **Awarded Scholarships to 66 Future Early Childhood Educators**

The CABS Division set a goal for 45 students to be awarded the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship. The target was exceeded with 66 ECC students awarded. Created to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators, students are encouraged to pursue credentials and advancement of already-held degrees in early childhood education. Awards are available for undergraduate study at public and non-profit private 2- and 4-year Gateways-entitled and ECACE member institutions, with priority given to renewal applicants. The scholarship helps pay the applicant's total cost of attendance for an academic year after other financial aid is received, up to \$7,500.

### **Dispersed \$5000 to Female Students**

The American Association of Women in Community Colleges (AAWCC) dispersed \$5000 (raised during the previous fiscal year) to 10 women for use in the 2023-24 academic year. The year's fundraising activities generated another \$5,500 (more than the \$5,000 target). Due to the excess, consideration was given to increasing the amount awarded to each recipient. Instead, the \$500 amount was maintained and awarded to 11 women for the 2024-25 academic year.

### **Waived Honors Course Fees**

Students in the Honors Program continued to receive a tuition waiver for a future Honors course when they earned an A or B in an Honors course. In FY2024, 13 students used a waiver for a total savings of \$9,613.

### **Secured Grant Funding Totaling over \$1.6 Million for Two Distinct Purposes**

Through the increased number of workforce development grants, totaling over \$1.4 million, ECC was able to serve individuals as they worked towards their career training goals with tuition and books support and barrier support such as transportation, uniforms, and basic needs. Through additional grant funds, ECC was able to offer students paid experiential learning opportunities with local employers, totaling over \$250,000 in income for students from special populations.

### **Activated Agreements for Bachelor Degree Completion at Lower Cost**

The Saluki Step Ahead agreement allows ECC students to pursue select online baccalaureate degrees through Southern Illinois University (SIU). Students receive early admission to SIU and are eligible for an \$8,000 scholarship over two years of full-time coursework at SIU. In a separate agreement with Roosevelt University (RU), culinary arts, hospitality management, and pastry arts students have the option to continue their education in pursuit of a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Tourism Management. Students are able to complete additional courses beyond the AAS degree at ECC while beginning courses at RU. Additionally, RU will offer on-site courses at their Schaumburg location, saving students from having to commute to their downtown Chicago campus.



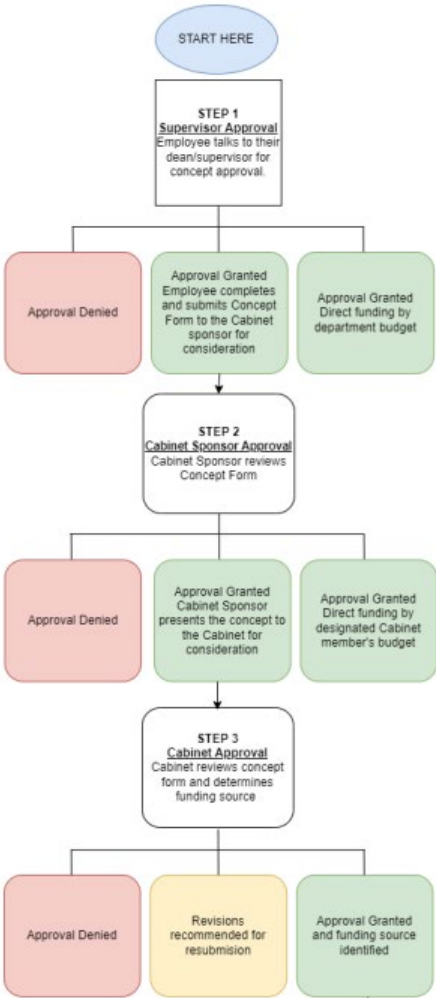
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## GOAL 9: INSTITUTIONAL FINANCIAL HEALTH

**STATEMENT:** Implement a common review/evaluation process for new (non-operational) budget requests above \$10,000 for FY2025 budgeting (by April 1) with a stretch goal of implementing it earlier (by February 29).

**OUTCOME: Target achieved.** The Budget Council used a scoring rubric to rank projects exceeding \$10,000 by April 1, 2024, and routed results to the Cabinet. The Universal Funding Form was implemented in fall 2023.



Three separate processes to request funds were evaluated: college fund requests over \$10,000 and funds for new initiatives, especially related to student success and equity, diversity, and inclusion from either ESSAC or the Foundation and Institutional Advancement. After reviewing the needs of key stakeholders and the various paper forms, all processes were flowcharted, resulting in a single process designed by a cross-functional team from all divisions, including members of the Cabinet. A new online form was created and lives on the Planning and Institutional Effectiveness space on MyElgin. This resource is available to all employees.

In the simplest terms, there are three main steps. Step 1 is to secure supervisor approval to ensure there are no departmental funds available and to make sure the project is supported by the department. If approved and there are no funds, the Concept Form is completed and submitted to a Cabinet sponsor for review. Step 2 is to acquire the sponsor’s approval on the project concept. If approved, the sponsor presents the concept to the rest of Cabinet for consideration. Using a rubric, the Cabinet determines whether the concept is approved or not. If so, the Cabinet also directs from where the funds will come. At any time

during the process, the project can be denied or sent back for revision.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 9: Institutional Financial Health

### **Bought Goods and Services from Minority or Women Owned Businesses**

Over the last year, the number of minority or women owned business ECC buys from has grown to 4%. Most of the college's awards go to the lowest bid per state statute. However steps are taken to continue to increase this diverse spend: searching the CMS (central management system) for Illinois certified business to include for each ITB (Invitation to Bid), RFQ (Request for Quote), and RFP (Request for Proposal); connect with BEP (Business Enterprise Program) vendors through conferences or events; add BEP vendors to our financial database, Colleague; educate our admin/staff buying items/services under \$5,000 to use diverse vendors when possible.

### **Reduced Annual Wireless Costs**

After a review of FY2023 wireless expenses, Information Technology and Services determined a number of mobile phones had been issued during COVID to employees that were either underutilized or not being used at all. The lines were cancelled and the phones were collected and repurposed to replace any lost or broken phones. While phone usage is a bit of a moving target with employees joining and leaving ECC, the expense decreased from \$167,367 to \$149,479, for a savings of \$17,888 in FY2024. Wireless expenses also include hotspots that are issued to both employees and students providing better access and connections for work and learning. The cost savings from the phones has been reallocated to the hotspots.

### **Sustained Tuition Costs**

FY2024 marked the sixth year that the college has maintained level tuition (\$132 per credit hour).

### **Implemented Qwestica Budget Management Software**

Implemented new features in the Qwestica software for use in the FY2025 budgeting process. This powerful budgeting tool enables all users to properly track and manage their own budgets with more details and allows for improved analysis and planning. Improvements helped with position management (salaries, benefits) by role within the department and change requests for line items that significantly increased or decreased from one year to the next, providing more room for explanation.

### **Received AAA Rating and Record Number of Bids**

ECC's financial health is very strong as evidenced by achieving Aaa credit rating from Moody's, the highest level of creditworthiness, with a low risk of default and is highly likely to meet financial obligations. In April 2024, the Board of Trustees authorized the college to prepare specifications to go out for a bond sale in FY2025 for the Manufacturing and Technology Center. This included meetings with Speer Financial, ECC's broker, to tailor a proposal fitting the college's needs in preparation for the bidding process in FY2025.



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## GOAL 10: COLLEGE FUNDRAISING

**STATEMENT:** Raise unrestricted college campaign funds of at least \$1.5 million with a stretch goal of \$2 million by June 30, 2024.

**OUTCOME: Target achieved.** Raised \$1,525,985 in unrestricted campaign funds.



*(Source: Institutional Advancement and ECC Foundation Report, August 13, 2024)*

For the FY2024 annual goal, the target to raise \$1.5 million in unrestricted college campaign funds was exceeded. Institutional Advancement and the ECC Foundation raised \$1,525,985 in monetary gifts, pledges, and commitments, representing almost 50.9% of the total ECC Bright Future Campaign goal of \$3M. However, as pledges and commitments, not all of these funds have been received to date.

The end of FY2024, saw \$2.7 million of the \$3M goal attained, 92% of the multi-year target. Investment in the Bright Futures Campaign is expected to continue through fall 2024 at which time an external audit will occur.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 10: College Fundraising

### **Awarded Record High Total in Scholarships and Grants**

The ECC Foundation awarded over \$400,000 in scholarships and grants to students in FY2024, an increase of 12% from the previous year (\$356,895), setting a new record for single-year awarding. There were 399 student recipients, an increase of 21%. These increases are attributed to multiple activities: engaging with students directly in the classroom highlighting the types of scholarships available and encouraging students to apply; identifying niche scholarships with a low number of applicants and building awareness among those student populations; expanded marketing efforts through posters and pamphlets.

### **Raised Over \$60,000 from 26<sup>th</sup> Annual ECC Foundation Golf Classic**

On June 17, over 100 golfers and attendees gathered at the Elgin Country Club for the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual ECC Foundation Golf Classic. Golfers and volunteers enjoyed time on the course, bought raffle tickets for the chance to win a variety of prizes and experiences, and raised money for student scholarships, totaling over \$60,000. A scholarship recipient and ECC student spoke to the audience about how the scholarships helped to achieve her academic and personal goals.

### **Held Annual Gala and Awarded Recognition for Service**

The ECC Foundation Gala, Dare to Dream, exceeded expectations raising just over \$67,000 in support of student scholarships. Attendance surpassed the previous year's Gala with 230 guests gathering at the Q Center in St. Charles. Student showcases provided a wonderful testament to ECC programming. The evening featured a theatrical expression from A Mid-Summer Night's Dream cast and an ice-sculpting segment. Recognition for selfless service was presented to awardees receiving one of the following awards: Friend of Education; Exceptional Friend of ECC Foundation; Distinguished Alumni Award; Esteemed Recent Alumni; and Lasting Impact Awards.

### **Selected Purses with Purpose 2024-2025 Academic Year Cohort**

The Purses with Purpose Scholarship Committee hosted its annual Interview Day on June 24, 2024. Six new candidates were invited to participate including two who Zoomed in from outside the country. In total, 11 students (5 returning scholars) were awarded \$16,750 in scholarships. The 2024-25 cohort of scholars joined many past scholars, mentors, and donors at the Lodge at Del Web for the annual Purses with Purpose Meet and Greet. At the event, attendees had the opportunity to meet each other and share how they came to be affiliated with ECC and Purses. The event also welcomed several new guests to learn more about the mission of the group and how they could help support future scholars.

### **Awarded 78% of Grant Applications**

There were a total of 57 grant applications researched, 23 were completed. Of those, 18 were successful for an award percentage of 78%. The combined award total for new and not established multi-year grants alone was over \$1M (most do not end until December 31, 2024).





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### GOAL 11: OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

**STATEMENT:** Go live with a request/project tracking system with follow-up satisfaction survey for rollout to four service departments with a stretch goal of training departments for use in FY2025 by June 30, 2024.

**OUTCOME: Target not achieved.** Jira implementation has begun with a "go-live" date delayed slightly until end of summer 2024 and department training to take place until the end of fall 2024.

The following is a high-level overview of implementation milestones demonstrating the tremendous effort and work that has been accomplished despite the go-live deadline not being achieved. In November 2023, ISOS was contracted to implement Jira. Between December 2023 and February 2025 discovery sessions were held with departments and ISOS. During the Discovery Phase, it was realized that many of the features ECC is requesting are only available, or are more straightforward to configure, in Jira Premium. The decision to upgrade from standard to premium was made. By mid-April, ISOS completed changes needed for Jira Premium which affected the initial timeline. Progress continued: building Jira Software Projects based on Colleague Departments through Active Directory syncs; ensuring a Human Resources (HR) issue level security Active Directory sync process; configuring the SysAid historical file upload; testing; and forms and workflows.

**Project  
Completion for  
Go-live  
58%**

User Acceptance Testing (UAT) began in May for HR, Web Services, Information Technology (IT), non-IT analysts, and Institutional Research, resulting in 178 issues being reported. As of the end of the fiscal year, 84 issues were resolved, 86 were being worked on, and 8 were on hold until after go-live. The issues and status updates are maintained in the Jira UAT Issue Log. Resources at ISOS are limited, so ECC's issues are not resolved as quickly as we would like; nonetheless, many issues are resolved internally by ECC analysts going above and beyond as time allows.

In collaboration with Marketing and Communications, progress continues in creating documentation for both those who will be managing Jira tickets on the backend and for the campus community as an introduction on how to submit a Jira ticket. Documentation will include short videos. By mid-June it became clear the go-live date would not occur during FY2024 but it is anticipated to be during the first half of FY2025.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 11: Operational Efficiency

### Streamlined Processes and Reporting Structure

Two separate but impactful efficiencies occurred to streamline college operations. First, the online Suggestion Box accessed from both Elgin.edu and MyElgin. Suggestions from students, employees, and the community are welcomed and sent directly to the Process Improvement Team anonymously. Second, Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS) was restructured. The reporting relationships moved from HR to IT (where most of ECC's other analysts are), which improves communication, work distribution, cross-functional training across analysts, as well as other benefits.

### Improved Position Evaluation Process and Transparency

As part of Talent Management's ongoing commitment to demystify the position evaluation process, Compensation and Classification conducted training sessions on the Hay Evaluation and Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) completion processes. The Hay Meetings for Administration and SSECCA positions are now scheduled monthly to provide timely evaluations and ensure that all salary decisions are well-informed and up-to-date. An explanation for each evaluation decision is also provided.

### Digitized Request for Testing Form Completed by Faculty

Historically, faculty submitted the required Request for Testing Form via PDF or paper copy for their students. In FY2024, this process was digitized using JOT software, making it easier for faculty to submit, modify, and track their testing center exams. The process of managing the submissions for Testing Center staff became more efficient and accurate. There has been a decrease in missing test items improving the student experience as there are fewer errors made in the course exam process.

### Increased Bandwidth, Decreased Helpdesk Tickets

During fall 2023, the IT helpdesk received several tickets about slow network and difficulties reaching websites during our peak traffic times. It had been before COVID since our bandwidth with our Internet Service Providers (ISP) was upgraded. Understanding that students, faculty, and staff now carry more Internet using devices as well as using more video and teleconferencing, ECC doubled its bandwidth. After the upgrades, network responsiveness has improved and we are no longer approaching capacity which should last us several years. We have received no helpdesk tickets for network slowdowns.