

Kankakee Community College

HLC ID 1105

OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review

Review Date: 11/18/2024

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Context and Nature of Review

Review Date

11/18/2024

Review Type:
Reaffirmation Review

Scope of Review

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

There are no forms assigned.

Institutional Context

Kankakee Community College (KCC) is an open-enrollment comprehensive community college primarily serving Illinois Community College District 520 in the northeastern portion of the state. The main campus is in Kankakee, Illinois. According to their most recent data update KCC offers 25 associate degrees and 97 certificates. KCC has additional locations consisting of the Manufacturing and Industrial Technology Center (MITC), also in Kankakee, the North Extension Center in Bradley, Illinois, and the South Extension Center in Watseka, Illinois. KCC serves 18 high schools in District 520. According to the FY24 Databook KCC has 853 full-time undergraduate students and 1305 part-time undergraduate students. KCC also serves adult education and continuing education students. According to the 2024 Institutional Update the College awarded 324 associate degrees and 358 certificates in the 2024 update timeframe. The College uses in-person, online, and hybrid modalities to deliver instruction.

KCC is served by a seven-member Board of Trustees, elected to six-years terms, and an additional non-voting student trustee elected annually by the student body. The current KCC president has held the position since 2019. KCC has been continuously accredited by HLC since 1974. The College completed a successful Comprehensive Quality Review in 2016 while on the AQIP pathway and is now on the Open Pathway.

Interactions with Constituencies

KCC BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Trustee, Chair
Trustee, Vice Chair
Trustee, Secretary
Trustee (3)

CRITERION 1 & 2

Academic Retention & Success Coach

Admin Asst x 4

Asst Dean Business, Technology & Human Services

Asst Dir Continuing ed & Business Partnerships

Asst Dir Financial Affairs

Asst Dir Financial Aid

Asst Dir TRIO Talent Search

Asst Dir TRIO Upward Bound

Asst Dir WIOA

Asst Prof Diesel

Asst Prof Nursing

Clinical Coord

Clinical Coord

Coord Adult & Community Ed

Coord Bookstore

Coord Employment & Professional Development

Coord Hispanic Engagement

Coord HR

Coord Institutional Research

Coord Payroll & Benefits

Coord Student Life & Development

Coord TRIO Student Support Services

Coord Workforce Opps

Dean Bus Tech & Human Services

Dean Health Careers

Dean Liberal Arts & Sciences

Dir Admin Info Systems

Dir Adult & Community Ed

Dir Business Affairs & Auxiliary Services

Dir Continuing Ed & Business Partnerships

Dir Enrollment Services/Registrar

Dir Financial Affairs

Dir Financial Aid

Dir Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment
Dir Lib
Dir Marketing & Public Relations
Dir Nursing
Dir of Manufacturing Training
Dir Student Success
Dir Support Services
Dir WIOA
Exec Asst to Pres and BOT
Lib Tech
Prof Art
Prof Education
Prof English
Prof English Composition
Prof Mathematics
Prof Physical Science & Engineering
Prof Psych
Prof/Dir Respiratory Therapist Program
Programmer II
Reference & Instruction Librarian
Senior Coord Disability Services
Senior Dir HR
Senior Dir IT
VP Academic Affairs
VP Advancement, Marketing & PR
VP Business Affairs
VP Student Affairs
SPECIAL TOPIC-DATA
Asst Dean Bus Tech/Program Dir Ag/Hort
Coord Institutional Research
Dir Admin Info Services
Dir Continuing Ed & Business Partnerships
Dir Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment
President

Prof English Composition
Prog Dir Respiratory
Programmer II
Senior Dir HR
Sr Dir ITS
VP Academic Affairs
VP Advancement, Marketing & PR
VP Business Affairs
VP Student Affairs
CRITERION 3 & 4
Academic Retention & Success Coach
Admin Asst x 5
Advisor Student Success
Asst Dean Bus Tech & Human Services
Asst Dir Continuing Ed & Business Partnerships
Asst Dir Enrollment Services
Asst Dir Financial Aid
Asst Dir Student Success
Asst Dir TRIO Student Support Services
Asst MLT
Asst Prof Paramedic
Asst Prof PTA
Coord Bookstore
Coord Hispanic Engagement
Coord HR
Coord Institutional Research
Coord Payroll & Benefits
Coord Student Life & Dev
CTE Navigator
Dean Bus Tech & Human Services
Dean Health Careers
Dean Liberal Arts & Sciences
Dir Administrative Information Systems
Dir Athletics

Dir Business Affairs & Auxiliary Services
Dir Enrollment Services/Registrar
Dir Facilities
Dir Financial Affairs
Dir Financial Aid
Dir Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment
Dir Instructional Tech & Faculty Dev
Dir Lib
Dir Manufacturing Training
Dir Marketing & Public Relations
Dir Network Systems
Dir Nursing
Dir Student Success
Dir Support Services
Interim Dir Adult & Community Ed
Lead Tutor
Lib Tech I
Mgr III IT
Navigator Health Careers
Prof A & P
Prof AC & Refrig
Prof Art
Prof Biology
Prof Early Ed
Prof Economics/Statistics
Prof Ed
Prof English
Prof English Composition
Prof English/Humanities
Prof History x 2
Prof Math
Prof MLT

Prof Nursing x 2
Prof Philosophy
Prof Physical Science & Chemistry
Prof Psych
Prof Respiratory Therapy
Prof/Program Coord Computer Graphic Tech
Senior Coord Biology Lab
Senior Dir HR
Senior Dir IT
Student Success Advisor
VP Academic Affairs
VP Advancement, Marketing & PR
VP Business Affairs
VP Student Affairs
CRITERION 5
Academic Retention & Success Coach
Admin Asst x 3
Asst Dean Bus Tech & Human Services
Asst Dir Continuing Education & Business Partnerships
Asst Dir FA
Asst Dir Financial Affairs
Asst Prof MLT
Coord
Coord Institutional Research
Coord Payroll & Benefits
Dean Bus Tech & Human Services
Dean Health Careers
Dean Liberal Arts & Sciences
Dir Administrative Information Systems
Dir Business Affairs & Auxiliary Services
Dir Continuing Ed & Business Partnerships
Dir Enrollment Services/Registrar
Dir FA

Dir Facilities
Dir Financial Affairs
Dir Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment
Dir Instructional Technology & Faculty Dev
Dir Lib
Dir Marketing & PR
Dir Mfg Training
Dir Network Systems
Dir Student Success
Dir Support Services
Interim Dir Adult & Community Ed
Prof AC & Refrig
Prof English Composition
Prof History
Prof Math
Prof MLT
Prof Nursing x 2
Prof Physical Science & Engineering
Programmer II
Senior Coord Biology Lab
Senior Coord Financial Affairs
Senior Dir HR
Senior Dir IT
VP Academic Affairs
VP Advancement, Marketing & PR
VP Business Affairs
VP Student Affairs
COMMUNITY MEMBERS
Adjunct Prof
Asst Dir Mfg
Bus Owner
Clinical Dir of Illinois
Coord DEI

County Health Dept Administrator
Dir Aging & Disability Services
Exec Dir x 2
Former Vice President
Gen Mgr
Manager
Regional Mgr
retired
Site Head of Communications
Superintendent
Vice President
SPECIAL TOPIC-CONSISTENCY OF LEARNING
Asst Dean Bus Tech & Human Services
Asst Dir Enrollment Services
Dean Business, Technology, and Human Svcs
Dean Health Careers
Dean Liberal Arts & Sciences
Dir Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment
Dir Instructional Tech & Faculty Dev
Dir of Continuing Ed & Business Partnerships
Dir Support Services
Interim Dir Adult & Community Ed
Prof English
Prof English Composition
Prof HVAC
Prof Math
VP Academic Affairs
VP Student Affairs
Student Meeting
Student Trustee (1)
Students (open invitation) (21)
OPEN FORUM-FACULTY
Full-time/Tenured x 17

Adjunct
OPEN FORUM-STAFF
full-time x 64
part-time

Additional Documents

- Presidential job description
- Conflict of interest documents for Trustees
- Student conduct cases list
- AI taskforce charge and composition

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 articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference 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 and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The Kankakee Community College (KCC) mission and related statements are suited to the context of the institution and the community it serves, are publicly known by staff, students, and the community, and internalized in operations.

KCC Board of Trustees policy requires it to annually reaffirm the college mission, vision, core values and philosophy. As reflected in minutes, this was last done in December of 2023. In the on-site meeting with trustees, they demonstrated knowledge of the mission and associated documents, recognized it as core to the institution, and commented on their focus on improving the quality of life in the community and enabling students to accomplish the core General Education (GE) outcomes. The KCC mission of "enhancing quality of life through learning" is found prominently on the KCC website (<https://www.kcc.edu/about/>), academic catalog, other materials, and in physical spaces across campus, along with the vision, philosophy, and core values. An internal marketing plan put into evidence shows efforts to communicate the mission and related statements. In all discussions with college employees, they evidenced knowledge of the mission and were able to articulate how it is relevant to their work and reflected in campus operations.

The vision statement expresses:

KCC is a flexible organization where teamwork is the expectation and student/client success the driving force. Our shared vision is to be a leader in creatively and rapidly responding to our community's educational needs, emphasizing quality, affordability and effective partnerships. KCC is dedicated to providing quality, comprehensive educational programs and services in a fiscally responsible manner. KCC offers a supportive environment for lifelong learning for the development of the individual and the community.

KCC describes its core values as Respect, Excellence, Learning, Integrity, and Collaboration. The KCC Philosophy, which includes seven general educational and community service goals prescribed by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), emphasizes pre-baccalaureate and career education, as well as other types of education including developmental, adult basic, non-credit, and continuing education.

The KCC mission was developed by the Board adhering to requirements of Illinois statutes and the ICCB system rules. The most recent revision to mission related documents was in late 2013, when the Philosophy Statement was revised to express an explicit commitment to diversity. This was confirmed through minutes of the "Committee of the Whole" and discussion with campus officials.

KCC utilizes a model of six career pathways: Arts & Culture, Business & Communication, General/Exploration, Helping Professions, Medical Professions, and STEM. Within these pathways the college offers "2-year associate degrees and workforce-focused certificates" as well as "adult education programming leading to a high school equivalency." New programs are approved through the Curriculum and Academic Standards (CAS) committee, which has representatives from faculty, Deans, and other administrators, with subsequent submission to the Board of Trustees and the ICCB. This shared governance process demonstrates the ability to review consistency with mission.

KCC is an open-enrollment institution, primarily serving District 520 of the Illinois community college system. Consistent with the KCC mission and goals, students have a broad range of services available for their support and success, such as advising, counseling, testing, and disability services, as well as physical spaces like the bookstore, academic success center, fitness center, and food pantry. KCC uses data and monitors trends to improve these services. For example, with a growing Hispanic population, KCC hired a Hispanic Engagement Coordinator, enabling an additional 40% growth in that student population by the end of the coordinator's first term.

In open forums and individual meetings both faculty and staff gave several specific examples of how budgeting is aligned with the mission. They credited the college for being financially responsible but prioritizing instruction in spending. Some examples: approval of the request of a drone for Agriculture/Horticulture, HVAC instructor being able to overspend budget due to increase in copper costs. Faculty asserted that they were consistently given the resources to do their jobs and spend funds as necessary, even if that meant the need for the transfer of funds from other areas. Several staff members noted that processes require that budget requests and expenditures address the mission.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
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 external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The KCC mission of "enhancing quality of life through learning" indicates a commitment to serving the public good.

KCC operates in a transparent and open manner, with locally elected Board members who hold open monthly meetings. The Board of Trustees Policy Manual defines the role of the Board to interpret "the educational and financial needs" of the college, district, and citizens. All college officials and trustees must sign annual conflict of interest statements, with trustees signing both a state and college form. Copies of these statements as requested were provided on-site. Fiscal outcomes are made open for public inspection and comment by the Board of Trustees, and audited financials are also available for public review. This structure of state regulations and locally elected officials representing community interests helps ensure educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes.

The mission, vision, philosophy and core values are also clearly integrated into the academic programs and strategic goals and measures. For example, three of five goals directly reference improving student success, creating equitable teaching and learning environments, and improving physical teaching and learning spaces. KCC recently adopted a Guided Pathways model to make planning and completion simpler and clearer for students and restructured many of its student services around this approach.

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility to engage and respond to needs of external constituencies, as indicated by the duties of the Board established in section 104.00 of the Board of Trustees Policy Manual. In discussions with board members, they were able to articulate their understanding of this responsibility.

KCC provided sufficient evidence that it seeks the input of external stakeholders and is responsive to their needs. Strategic planning processes engaging external constituencies include community learning days, focus groups, surveys, and meetings. Workforce partners give input through advisory committees, which meet to review the quality and relevance of current program offerings. In meeting

with community and workforce partners, they were able to speak to the consistent engagement and responsiveness of KCC. They gave specific wide ranging examples, such as a new year long partnership with a battery manufacturing plant, start-up of a diesel program, and the development of non-credit mental health training. This was summarized by the comment that KCC consistently responds “what do you need, how can we help?” Community members also gave many examples of using KCC facilities for a variety of purposes, such as a vaccination event during the pandemic, and how KCC staff were highly involved in community boards and other functions. It is clear KCC is a valued component of the local community.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Rating

Met

Rationale

KCC provides its students curricular and cocurricular activities that prepare them to be informed citizens and have workplace success. This is evidenced in the goals for general education, including "Responsibility", through the courses required for its plans of study, in work-based learning opportunities, and other programs such as the First Year College Experience (FYCE).

The three KCC general education goals are Critical Thinking, Communication, and Responsibility. They describe these as "the knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and behaviors that students are expected to develop as a result of their overall experiences with any aspect of the college, including courses, programs, and student services, both inside and outside of the classroom." All graduating students are expected to demonstrate some level of attainment in these core outcomes.

KCC demonstrates an emphasis on the inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations. The core general education goal of "Responsibility" expects that students "will model ethical and professional behavior and cultivate an environment supportive of equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging." In the FYCE students participate in a "common read" program exploring the book *Beyond Diversity*. The course includes collaborative efforts of library staff and faculty to "create activities, events, and discussions that foster civic engagement and cultural awareness", as well as "help students develop critical thinking, communication skills, responsibility, and a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives." On-site discussions with students who had participated in the FYCE indicated their perception of the value of this program, and in the open forums it was estimated that around 20% of students completed FYCE.

KCC has many initiatives that intentionally address the diversity of society and global connectedness of the world. Examples of civic engagement and workplace success are the many events, workshops and career exploration tools provided by Career Services, sessions on financial literacy from library staff, and club engagement with community partners.

KCC has systematic processes in place to provide equal opportunity and a discrimination-free

environment in the hiring and onboarding process. These are embedded in the checklist for advertising, screening, and hiring, with the make-up and training of committee members, and screening process for on-campus interviews. In the open forums it was expressed that KCC had made significant progress over the last four years in increasing the hiring of underrepresented groups so that proportions were more reflective of the student body and community. The Personnel Policy and Procedures handbook also demonstrated the KCC commitment to equitable treatment of all employees. KCC supports engagement in EDI initiatives, evidenced through the EDI Assessment Plan, Strategic Plan, and sustainment of an EDI Council. “Respect” was adopted as a core value of KCC in 2008. This idea is defined and operationalized in the Cavaliers Care booklet.

KCC uses specific questions on the Noel Levitz employee satisfaction survey to gauge performance in fostering an inclusive climate and culture. From 2018 to 2021 importance has remained high between “important” and “very important” and satisfaction has slightly improved to near “satisfied,” with the gap between importance and satisfaction closing. Results on the Student Satisfaction Inventory were similar and generally favorable to comparison institutions.

Discussions with all constituencies (students, staff, faculty, community) consistently indicated a welcoming educational environment and a respectful, inclusive campus climate.

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.

Rationale

The Kankakee Community College (KCC) has a longstanding, simple, clear and consistent mission centered around “quality of life” and “learning,” focused on Illinois Community College District 520. This mission and associated documents are regularly reviewed and affirmed by its elected Board of Trustees. The mission is well-known and understood throughout the campus and local community, as consistently evidenced in individual meetings and open forums. The associated vision, core values, and philosophy are also foundational to the institution, and inform their strategic planning, curriculum development, and resource allocation.

KCC operationalizes its mission by serving a vital role in meeting the educational and workforce development needs of the community. The college demonstrates responsiveness and innovation in fulfilling that purpose. Diversity is valued, as evidenced in documentation and on-site conversations as well as processes, goals, and strategic priorities. All KCC constituencies consistently expressed their pride that the mission was not some forgotten platitude but rather is central in guiding their daily work.

In summary, the visiting team finds that Criterion One is met.

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 establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Kankakee Community College (KCC) establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

KCC is a comprehensive public community college as established by the provisions outlined in the Illinois Public Community College Act (110 ILCS.805) and serves as an individual entity with its own governing board. The seven trustees are elected by voters residing within the established boundaries of District 520 and adhere to the policies set forth by the Board of Trustees Policy Manual when executing oversight of the College. The role of the Board regarding annual reaffirmation (December Board meeting) of the College's mission, vision, and values, are outlined in section 104.00 of the Board of Trustees Policy Manual. A prior review is conducted by the administration and is forwarded to the Board Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion and approval.

Board members are guided and held accountable by the guidelines of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, Conflict of Interest Compliance Statement and Board Bylaws regarding financial, property, business, political and personal interests. The leadership and day-to-day operations of the College are delegated by the Board to the KCC President.

KCC operates with integrity in its academic, financial, physical and personnel functions as there exist policies and procedures to ensure ethical practices for faculty, staff and administrators. The College practices accepted business and accounting principles and is required to complete an annual external audit. Financial reports are prepared and presented by the administration at monthly Board meetings where they are voted upon. The institution maintains appropriate levels of reserve funds, and the administration engages faculty and staff in the annual budget process.

The KCC faculty and staff handbooks outline the roles, responsibilities and behavioral expectations

of employees, including standards for ethical behavioral conduct and academic integrity. There is an established review and appeal process to address non-compliant behavior as outlined in the KCC Employee Handbook. Formal grievance processes for faculty also are found in the Full-Time and Adjunct Faculty Contracts, and grievance processes for students are found in the Student Complaint Policy, as well as in course syllabi. Other statements regarding the College's commitment to integrity are found in the Cavaliers Cares booklet, the Whistleblower Policy, Red Flags Policy, Terms of Employment Policy and Progressive Disciplinary Policy.

The College website addresses policies and expectations that hold employees and students to high standards of conduct. The website also addresses campus safety, Clery reports, and policies on drug and alcohol use, sexual misconduct, discrimination and harassment, and appropriate technology usage.

KCC's structure indicates a process of shared governance at the institution. As shared in the meetings conducted by the visiting team, faculty, staff and students are represented on college-wide committees and also have a voice through their respective campus associations.

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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.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Rating

Met

Rationale

KCC represents itself clearly to its students and the public. The institution's website provides information in a clearly defined manner and is easy to access and navigate. The website includes the College's mission and values statements, the College governance structure, the Academic Catalog, which is updated annually, a faculty roster with credentials, department and staff listings, costs to students, and accreditation relationships, as well as admissions, financial aid, and student services information.

KCC uses a myriad of strategies in digital, hard copy, and in-person format for disseminating information to the public. These include on-site visits to K-12 schools, new student orientation, campus tours, brochures, and social media. The Consumer Information and Disclosures page on the website provides links to many public-facing items such as Title IX, safety and crime statistics, freedom of speech, student outcomes indicators, and Freedom of Information Act request procedures.

Students and the public also are engaged through various social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, X, YouTube, and LinkedIn for sharing college news, events, and other information. There also exists a student's event calendar listing relevant activities and events. Local citizens can interact with KCC through its Continuing Education and Community Education departments, which offer non-credit workshops, personal development programs, CEUs, and customized workforce training. Facilities such as the Fitness Center, Library, and meeting rooms also are open for public use.

In on-site conversation with the visiting team, community members were highly complementary of the institution for all the programs and services it provides for the public, and they voiced gratitude to the College opening its doors to them. Some community members also are active with the KCC Foundation, or they've been allocated office space on campus to better provide their services to students. New programs such as Diesel Engine Technology and a certificate in Mental Health resulted from collaborations between community businesses and college personnel.

Similarly, students in conversation with the visiting team voiced high satisfaction with KCC, both in

and out of the classroom. Students were specifically appreciative of the Veteran's Center, the Library space, availability of technology, the food pantry, and the friendly, welcoming environment. The students believe that the education they are receiving at KCC will prepare them for the future workforce.

Employees are kept informed through a variety of communication modes. In addition to institutional email and notices, minutes are available for Board of Trustees meetings, the Curriculum and Academic Standards committee, as well as other important information found on the College's Portal.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The seven-member Board of Trustees, elected by voters residing in the defined geographic area of District 520, meets monthly on campus to establish College policies, approve financial expenditures, and for the purpose of appointing and evaluating the KCC President. Board members are guided by the established Bylaws which stipulate knowledge of and compliance with the legal responsibilities and role of the Board, including adherence to state guidelines for conflict of interest, political matters, handling of confidential information, and other responsibilities. A non-voting student representative to the Board is appointed annually by the Student Advisory Council, reporting an update on the student experience and issues during the meeting. There were faculty members who expressed a desire for a faculty representative to have this same opportunity.

Board members are required, through Illinois Public Act 99-692, to complete four hours of professional development leadership training during their 1st, 3rd, and 5th years in office. Subjects covered - as identified by the Illinois Community College Trustees Association - must include, but are not limited to, laws pertaining to open meetings, community college labor, freedom of information, and contracts, as well as ethics, sexual violence on campus, financial oversight and accountability, audits, and fiduciary responsibilities. Additionally, the KCC President's Office elicits input from the Trustees to identify other training needs they have.

The Board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities by reviewing and approving monthly college financial reports, reviewing and approving the annual KCC budget, and engaging an annual third-party audit made available to the public.

In meeting with representatives from the Board, the visiting team was impressed with the level of knowledge they have of KCC, its programs and services, and its impact on the communities it serves.

The visiting team confirmed that the Board operates appropriately at the policy level, leaving daily operations to the College President and administration. While the Board has responsibility for final approval of new academic programs, the ongoing oversight and development of academic matters lie with the faculty. KCC employees are well acquainted with the purpose and roles of the Board. A notable number of employees indicated to the visiting team that they have attended a Board meeting and/or read the Board minutes once published.

The KCC President reports directly to the Board and is evaluated annually on agreed upon performance objectives and goals. The President meets with the Board Chair monthly and provides Board members with a communique on a regular basis to keep them informed of college initiatives, events, and activities.

Board meetings follow the requirements of the state Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS.120) to ensure accountability, adherence to state law, deliberations supporting the College mission and values, and providing access to public comment and engagement. Board meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes are available to the public on the KCC website. As elected representatives to the service district, Board members indicated to the visiting team that they serve as liaisons to the community and regularly interact with their constituents to keep them aware of what the College offers to the community.

The visiting team determined that the Board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, other elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties. Board members are required annually to sign a Kankakee County Statement of Economic Interest as well as a Freedom from Conflict of Interest Statement as per Board Policy Manual (Item 704.00). The Board Policy Manual contains specific definitions of interest and other details regarding gifts, gratuities and inside information.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

KCC outlines its commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression through the Board of Trustees policy on Freedom of Speech, Expression and Assembly Activities (603.02), Faculty Contract, and Student Handbook, as well as guidance in the institution's Personnel Policy and Procedures Handbook for staff.

Faculty members indicated to the visiting team that they are satisfied with their role regarding academic freedom, as they are responsible for determining course content, materials, and evaluation for their classes. Faculty speak highly of the support they receive from their respective Deans, and they believe that they have the appropriate resources for effective teaching and learning.

Student freedom of expression is addressed in the Student Life Policies and Procedures Handbook. It clearly outlines student rights regarding expressive activities and free expression of ideas.

KCC's commitment to EDI work is evidenced by its support and providing opportunities and activities for students and employees that allow for discussion on varying views and opinions. For example, through the twice monthly "Snacks and Chats" initiative, people come together to discuss specific topics such as Communicating Respectfully in a Diverse World, Disability and Diversity, Inclusive Language and Terminology, Differing Expressions of Faith, Engaging in Difficult Conversations on Sexuality and Gender Identity, and Engaging in Difficult Conversations on Race. Community members commented to the visiting team that they appreciate the invitation to participate in these conversations along with the employees and students.

KCC's General Education outcomes, as addressed in Criterion 3, provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to function effectively in society. These standards include Communication, Critical Thinking, and Responsibility.

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, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Rating

Met

Rationale

While KCC does not have a research focused mission, the College does provide support for students and faculty research activities. The institution maintains appropriate policies and processes for human subject studies and follows the Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines outlined by the KCC IRB Submission Guide. The IRB is responsible to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment which ensures that all data acquisition and procedures comply with the Code of Federal Regulations and the US Food and Drug Administration requirements.

The Miner Memorial Library and Student Success Center offer materials, support, and workshops for students, both on-site and online, to assist them in research activities. Faculty with a research component in their course also provide in-class instruction for students. Librarians are available, both on-site and virtually, for individual consultations for students and staff members on their research projects. In conversation with the visiting team, students expressed appreciation for all the services and assistance provided by the library staff.

KCC enforces and has clear policies for students regarding academic honesty and integrity. These policies can be found on the website in the Code of Campus Affairs and Regulations, as well as in individual course syllabi. Guidance to faculty for cases of academic dishonesty is outlined in the Faculty Handbook. KCC utilizes the Maxient student conduct software for reporting these matters, which are then referred to the Conduct Officer for due process procedures. The visiting team discovered that some faculty members have preferred to manage such cases between themselves and the student, so training is available to faculty to assist them in these situations. However, faculty are strongly encouraged by the Conduct Officer to follow the standard reporting process for staff to track any repeat student offenses and/or trends.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Rationale

KCC is a comprehensive public community college as established by the provisions outlined in the Illinois Public Community College Act (110 ILCS.805) and serves as an individual entity with its own governing board. The seven trustees are elected by voters residing within the established boundaries of District 520 and adhere to the policies set forth by the Board of Trustees Policy Manual when executing their role on behalf of the College. The Board delegates to the College President leadership of the institution and the autonomy to make decisions in its day to day operations.

KCC upholds the principle of integrity in its operations and activities and conducts itself in an ethical and responsible manner. Clear policies and procedures exist to communicate expectations for integrity of the Board, employees, and students. These policies and expectations are found on the website; in the faculty, staff, and student handbooks; and in the Board of Trustees bylaws and policies. KCC employees and students are held accountable through defined complaint and grievance processes, faculty and staff performance reviews, and expectations against harassing, discriminating and other unlawful behaviors.

In reviewing the Assurance Report and conducting onsite interviews, the visiting team concludes that KCC embodies its mission, values, and goals. The team observed a culture of respect and care for students and among employees. There exists a high level of camaraderie between employees, and the institution enjoys notable praise and respect from the community. Students cited high support from faculty and staff for both academic and out of classroom issues.

The institution presents itself fully and clearly to students and the public through its website and other materials and mediums. Policies, procedures, expectations, and costs are clearly presented and comparable to other similar higher education institutions.

The visiting team concludes that Criterion Two is Met.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its 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

Rationale

KCC evaluates its academic and career programs every five years to ensure that they are current and have appropriate levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded. Bloom's taxonomy is used to develop outcomes for each program. As part of the program review process, advisory committee boards provide feedback on how student learning outcomes align with industry standards. Faculty and administrators review the feedback and use it to develop continuous improvement plans. Additionally, several health programs have accreditation bodies which require programs to demonstrate that they are not only current but that their students meet the learning outcomes.

The Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee approves all new courses and revisions. Faculty determine whether curriculum is appropriate to certificates and degrees based on the course learning objectives. Bloom's taxonomy is also used to develop outcomes for each course.

Learning goals for each certificate and program are identified in the Academic Catalog and can be accessed publicly from the college's website. In cases where a certificate is aligned with a degree, the learning outcomes are displayed and show that they are differentiated by the specific level. Agriculture is listed as an example. Per communication from the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO), the AA/AS/AES degrees are areas of study, not programs. It is recommended that the College clarify areas of study versus programs in the Academic Catalog.

The institution is in compliance with the federal policy for credit hour requirements as well as the ICCB Administrative Rules Section 1501.309 - Course Classification and Applicability for credit

hour requirements in all its divisions. As an example, KCC computes one lecture hour as 1X 50 minutes X 16 weeks. Additionally, four-year partner institutions validate the transfer course currency and rigor as designated through the ICCB Transfer Course Articulation form. The final review is done by the Illinois Articulation Initiative.

It is evident that KCC's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations. The College's Curriculum and Assessment Handbook determines how new courses are developed and ensures that existing courses are revised with appropriate levels of student performance for the degree programs. Course outcomes are listed on the *Master Syllabus* and must be included on each faculty's section syllabi. Program directors, coordinators, and discipline heads review course syllabi to ensure consistency. A review of the syllabi contained in the addendum of the assurance argument showed that three individual sections did not include course objectives, but these are exceptions in an otherwise consistent, well-structured process for being transparent in courses.

KCC provided sample syllabi across all modalities, modes of delivery, and locations. Courses held at the high schools use the Master Syllabus which contains the course learning goals. KCC ensures consistency in learning goals by other methods, including student and faculty evaluations, and assessment of student learning.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. 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. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Rating

Met

Rationale

KCC's general education curriculum is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution as evidenced by the program's composition of five disciplines: communication, mathematics, life/physical sciences, humanities/fine arts, and social/behavioral sciences. All associate degree programs incorporate a specific number of credit hours of the general education curriculum as listed under each program of study in the Academic Catalog. Furthermore, KCC's Philosophy statement helps to articulate the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its general education requirements.

The five disciplines of the general education program reflect broad areas of knowledge and intellectual concepts and assist the students in accomplishing various goals, including being a responsible citizen, developing career goals, and becoming lifelong learners. In addition to the general education curriculum, KCC has three general education outcomes: communication, critical thinking, and responsibility. Coupled together, the general education curriculum and outcomes provide a foundation for helping students to develop skills and attitudes that KCC believes every college-educated person should possess.

As articulated in KCC's purpose statement, it is evident that the institution recognizes human and cultural diversity and provides its students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills enabling them to work and live in a multicultural environment. Courses such as *SOCY 1613- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging*, and *ORIN 1541-Foundations for Student Success* embody the institution's commitment to human and cultural diversity. The recently adopted Equity, Diversity,

and Inclusion Plan highlights teaching and learning as priorities. Lastly, there are academic and student life activities highlighted by the EDI Center and EDI coordinator.

KCC provided evidence that its faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and institution's mission. These examples include, from the Continuing Education and Business Partnerships Department, the Lifelong Learning Institute, which offers classes and discussions for students and the community; the KCC Art Show, which displays student art; and the Common Read Program, which facilitates important discussions and activities.

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 strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. 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, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. 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.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

Rating

Met

Rationale

KCC strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves. One of the ways this is exemplified is in the College's strategic plan. KCC's goal is to increase diversity in the candidate pools as well as to maintain employee satisfaction with respect to inclusion, respect, and sensitivity. KCC provided evidence that all employees serving on a hiring committee must complete KCC's Diverse Hiring Training. Since the program's inception in 2021, 30% of the new hires from 147 search committees have yielded an ethnically diverse candidate. Further, the Equity Planning Team monitors the progress of the EDI Assessment Plan and makes recommendations for continuous improvement.

It is evident that KCC has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty. Data from the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) and IPEDS is used for benchmarking of faculty staffing. Accordingly, KCC's class sizes are slightly below the national averages. The majority (70%) of course sections at KCC are taught by full-time faculty. Additionally, 75% of full-time faculty served on college committees over the last five years. It is important to note that per the faculty contract, conditions are in place to ensure sufficient faculty representation on committees.

KCC's instructors are appropriately qualified. KCC abides by their written document entitled *Process*

for Determining Minimally Qualifies Faculty Members. This document adheres to HLC guidelines as well as those of the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). KCC maintains stricter guidelines than HLC for credentialing. Additionally, faculty who regularly teach in the field are consulted on hiring decisions. KCC has a Faculty Audit File listing the credentials and/or rationale for hiring each faculty member. Faculty qualifications are audited on an annual basis by the deans and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

It is evident that KCC instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures as documented in the Full-Time Faculty Contract. While adjunct faculty are evaluated at least once every three years, nontenured faculty are evaluated annually by administration, and tenured faculty are evaluated once every five years. Per the contract, faculty evaluations can occur earlier than the cycle if warranted (e.g., unfavorable student evaluations). While the specific processes for tenured and nontenured faculty are different, regardless of faculty type, student evaluations are completed for every course each semester.

KCC has sufficient processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles. All full-time faculty complete a professional development plan annually and are encouraged to take specific professional development funded by the \$65,000 annual allocation. Full-time faculty are eligible for sabbatical leave and reimbursement for relevant course work. The College also offers professional development training (e.g., Teaching and Learning Center) to all full-time and part-time faculty. While KCC offers professional development funds to its faculty, no specific training is required for faculty to teach online classes. However, specific trainings (e.g., Online course design and pedagogy course in canvas, a self-review of online teaching) are recommended.

KCC instructors are accessible for student inquiry per the provision of the Full-Time Faculty Contract requiring them to hold at least five student support hours during the Fall and Spring semesters and two hours in the Summer. Faculty are supposed to include in their syllabi how they will communicate with students and list which options are available to communicate (e.g., phone, email, etc.) While there was no mention about adjunct faculty and their accessibility, KCC noted that on the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), students rated being satisfied with their access to engage faculty. The rating was above average in comparison to peer institutions.

KCC staff members providing student support services are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development. This is evident in that all job descriptions include the minimum qualifications that applicants must meet to be hired. Upon hire, all staff undergo training based on their position. Additionally, all staff are required to stay relevant on policy and legislative changes. As part of the performance evaluation process, specific recommendations could be made for professional development opportunities. The College also offers professional development via the Leadership Development Program, and professional development funds are allocated in departmental budgets.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for 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 offerings 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 and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Rating

Met

Rationale

KCC provides student support services suitable to the needs of its student populations as evidenced by such services as tutoring, advising, financial aid, a food pantry, mental health services, career services, services for students with disabilities, a fitness center, and employment and transfer services. KCC recently created the role of Retention Navigator to assist students with basic needs and wrap around services.

KCC provides learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. KCC has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared. KCC uses multiple measures, which is an approach that places students directly into college math and English based on test scores, high school classes and grades, and/or grade point average. If not placed directly into college math, ALEKS and or Accuplacer scores are used to place students. Students can prepare for these tests with resources from the Testing Center.

If students do not place into college math or English based on placement test scores, they are eligible to take corequisite developmental courses which are linked to math and English. Should students place lower than required for the corequisites in math, they can take a free 16-week math prep course. There is also a summer bridge program for math and English.

It is evident that KCC provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students in that it requires advising in the first semester for students to develop a master academic plan that guides them until completion. Advisors at KCC specialize in one of six pathways and are assigned to students based on the pathway. Special affinity groups (e.g., TRIO Student Support Services, athletes, dual credit) are assigned staff specifically to work with them. Students can access advisers by appointment and through selected walk-in days.

Based on the decrease in scores from the 2023 Student Satisfaction Survey, KCC is in the process of improving its advising services to further meet the students' needs. As a result, a plan has been put in place by the Strategic Enrollment Management team which includes reviewing consistency in operating procedures, training, and tools to assist students.

KCC has the necessary infrastructure and resources to support effective teaching and learning. As evidence, KCC has an adequate technology plan that is updated annually. A Teaching and Learning Center supports faculty in effective teaching practices and aids both students and faculty in using Canvas, the learning management system. Results from the Student Satisfaction Survey reveal that students are satisfied with the quality and availability of computers. Additionally, there are sufficient science labs, a resourceful library, and sufficient clinical sites and art labs/collections. The visiting team commends the College for keeping current its technology, classrooms, labs, and equipment for students to be prepared for success in the workplace.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Rationale

It is apparent that KCC provides a quality education for its students. Through KCC's general education curriculum and outcomes, students are provided an education that is broad in scope and helps them to be prepared for success beyond the classroom. Mechanisms have been put in place to ensure quality and consistency in KCC's educational offerings through assessment of courses and programs. While each degree program has outcomes listed in the Academic catalog, it is recommended that the College clarify “areas of study” versus programs.

KCC is consistent in its quality of education regardless of location or modality. Required course outcomes and standard minimum qualifications for staff and faculty help to ensure the quality of instruction and services.

Based on the assurance argument and conversations with students, KCC offers an array of support services to assist them to be successful academically. Additionally, professional development, resources, and infrastructure are provided to support student learning.

The visiting team concludes that Criterion 3 is met.

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 ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
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 ensure 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 ensures 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 ensures that the credentials 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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Kankakee Community College (KCC) ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

The program review process is structured around a five-year cycle, as detailed in Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Administrative Rule 1501.303 d. The review process follows a clear path involving multiple stakeholders, such as program leads, supervisors, institutional effectiveness and assessment, and the VPAA, before final submission to the Board of Trustees. Reports include indicators of need, cost-effectiveness, and quality. While previous action plans are formally addressed at the start of the next program review report, informal progress check-ins occur annually.

The Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) process is clearly outlined on KCC's website. The KCC Registrar's Office evaluates scores, certifications, and credit from recognized or accredited

organizations supported as needed by academic deans and faculty. KCC participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative, which ensures course alignment and facilitates credit transfer across institutions.

The Curriculum and Academic Standards (CAS) Committee manages the curriculum process and ensures that all courses include standardized elements identified in a master syllabus. As confirmed on-site, “faculty are the guardians of instruction.” In addition to features like outcomes, outlines, school policies, and common assessments, the master syllabus includes learning resources. Learning resources are also available for all students through Canvas and in the library. Dual Credit courses follow the same syllabus and outcomes, and students participate in the same assessment processes. Across all faculty types, deans and the VPAA annually review faculty credentials to ensure compliance with the standards set by the ICCB.

The ICCB has recognized KCC through September 2029, which means it meets ICCB instructional, administrative, financial, facility, and equipment standards. KCC has seven Health Careers programs with specialized accreditation, and other programs support workforce development by providing students with the opportunity to earn industry credentials.

Students seeking to transfer in-state benefit from the Illinois Articulation Initiative with additional statewide articulation resources provided on the KCC website. Partner institutions provide data on the success of transferred graduates, particularly in health careers programs. Advisory Committees play a role in maintaining program quality, and employer feedback is also collected to assess graduate readiness. The importance of the Advisory Committees was confirmed on-site in multiple settings with multiple stakeholders. When a community partner recommended a Diesel program to the Automotive Advisory Committee, the response “exceeded my expectations,” with the program up and running within 18 months. KCC uses the newly provided ICCB dashboard to track post-secondary employment outcomes and provide data-informed recommendations for program improvements.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Rating

Met

Rationale

KCC engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

KCC's commitment to strengthening assessment processes is demonstrated by its participation in HLC's Assessment Academy and indicated by the following on-site faculty comment: "Assessment has evolved into something more meaningful." Assessment at KCC is overseen by the Student Learning Committee (SLC), which reports to the Curriculum and Academic Standard Committee. The SLC is a cross-functional team, co-chaired by a faculty member and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment. Expectations for participation in assessment are included in the KCC Faculty Handbook and apply to all full-time, part-time, and dual credit faculty. The SLC identifies professional development opportunities for assessment, including those provided by the Teaching and Learning Center and during in-service days.

KCC uses a Plan-Do-Check-Act methodology for assessing student learning, as articulated in the Curriculum and Assessment Guidebook. Annually, in the fall, faculty submit course assessment plans, which the SLC reviews. In the spring, results are reported, including budget impacts and training needs.

Course- and program-level assessments are based on outcomes in the Curriculum Management System. The Course Assessment Plan and Report documents faculty work as they assess course outcomes. Course assessments drive improvement, for example, by adding an embedded tutor in the Anatomy & Physiology course sequence. Program leads document program-level assessments in a Program Assessment Plan. For example, when the Nursing program identified a need for improvement in resume/cover letter/interview skills in the RN program, they implemented multiple interventions.

KCC has General Education Learning Outcomes of Communication, Critical Thinking, and Responsibility. From staff, to faculty, to administrators, to the members of the Board of Trustees, all

echoed the importance of these outcomes to student success. To support faculty in identifying appropriate assessments and standardizing scoring, faculty submit assignment descriptions and high- and low-scoring student artifacts. The general education outcome reports produced by the Student Learning Committee summarize findings and recommendations, with 76%-95% of students scoring at the “reasonable” level or higher. The institution provides these summaries during in-service sessions and other committee meetings. As confirmed onsite, KCC provides institutional interventions and asks faculty to report which recommendations they enacted.

Cocurricular assessment continues to be an area of opportunity for KCC. KCC defines cocurricular activities as “Learning activities, programs, and experiences that reinforce KCC’s mission and values and support learning outcomes.” Assessment of cocurricular activities focuses on those that directly align with course, program, or general education outcomes. KCC inventoried cocurricular activities to identify learning outcome alignment. In the spirit of continuous improvement, a recent student club assessment project did not meet expectations, and cocurricular assessment efforts are currently being revisited.

External validation from the Illinois Community College Board confirms that KCC’s assessment processes are in compliance, with no issues reported.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve 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, 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

Rationale

KCC pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

KCC has established a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan with defined goals for retention, persistence, and completion. These goals are ambitious, attainable, and appropriate, with yearly targets to measure progress. The SEM plan includes several focus areas, including aligning recruitment efforts with the institutional scorecard, increasing overall enrollment, developing a more effective student onboarding process, improving retention rates, monitoring changing demographics and economic conditions, and expanding partnerships. The SEM plan covers 2023-2025, with the narrative listing the 2025 targets. KCC relies upon multiple internal and external data sources to inform decision-making and track outcomes.

KCC uses yearly action plans and targets to implement changes based on the analysis of retention, persistence, and completion data. These action plans include yearly targets, objectives, target populations (as appropriate), and action steps. As confirmed on-site, data-informed changes have included the creation of a mentorship program to improve retention rates of Black/African American students and a Hispanic Engagement Center to support the increase in the Hispanic student population. Employees were proud to share the benefits of the newly hired Retention Navigators.

KCC follows good practices for collecting and analyzing data on student retention, persistence, and completion. They compare their data with those of other community colleges in the state and have developed the KCC Scorecard based on aspirational goals aligned with the Aspen prize.

Additionally, they benchmark against national and state-level data from a variety of sources.

KCC has been recognized for its efforts, having been selected as one of eight community colleges nationwide to participate in the Community College Research Center and Complete College America Study aimed at closing equity gaps. Further, KCC has engaged in external activities with national organizations, including EAB and professional organizations, to improve their data collection and analysis practices.

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.

Rationale

KCC prepares its graduates for advanced study or employment by ensuring the quality of all educational credit it accepts or offers and seeking specialized accreditation where warranted. Credit for Prior Learning and transfer credits are evaluated according to transparent processes. Courses and programs offered in all locations undergo regular evaluation to be responsive to the needs of students, employers, and the institution. Advisory Committees and ICCB dashboards provide actionable data on student success.

Since 2016, KCC has embarked on a comprehensive redevelopment of its assessment practices with the support of the HLC Assessment Academy. Faculty regularly submit both course and program assessment reports, which include improvement plans. The streamlined general education learning outcomes - Communication, Critical Thinking, and Responsibility - reveal high rates of student preparedness along with active efforts to continue to improve these outcomes. KCC is committed to cocurricular assessment and is working to identify methods that lead to effective measurement and change. The Student Learning Committee, Institutional Effectiveness department, and the Teaching and Learning Center provide support for this work.

KCC's Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan identifies ambitious, attainable, and appropriate retention, persistence, and completion targets. Annual action plans have led to data-informed improvements, like the hiring of Retention Navigators. KCC utilizes appropriate benchmarks and engages with national organizations to ensure good practice.

In all areas, the institution exemplifies its mission of "enhancing quality of life through learning" by fostering a culture of evidence-based improvement, ensuring educational offerings, learning environments, and improvement efforts consistently meet high standards and serve the diverse needs of its students effectively.

The visiting team concludes that Criterion Four is Met.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The Kankakee Community College (KCC) leadership effectively engages its internal constituencies through planning, policies, and procedures. As confirmed in a meeting with the Board of Trustees, as well as a review of board agendas and minutes, the board is involved in planning processes including participation in the "Committee of the Whole" annual planning meeting that includes review and approval of best- and worst-case enrollment scenarios, strategic enrollment management plans, financial reports, and disaggregated student success data.

There is sufficient evidence to indicate that KCC engages its faculty and staff in planning through a transparent committee structure. Each academic year, the College lists all college committees, each committee's purpose, and the committee's composition by employee type. Faculty and staff confirmed there were multiple opportunities to participate in KCC committees. Employee representation on the committees appropriately include faculty and staff. Faculty Association leadership noted that they are currently meeting monthly with the Vice President of Academic Affairs and expressed a desire to meet more consistently with the College President.

Students are engaged in shared governance through the Student Advisory Council (SAC). According to the SAC constitution, the purpose of the organization is to "represent student interests, promote college pride and participation..., and provide a medium through administration, and the Board of Trustees." A meeting with students revealed that SAC has access to administration and the Board of

Trustees. While most information brought to the board from SAC is informational, students felt comfortable bringing ideas or issues to the board.

KCC has sufficient data available to appropriately inform decisions. The College collects a variety of data including disaggregated IPEDS data for student enrollment and student success, as well as participating in several national third-party surveys. Conversations with staff revealed that several years ago KCC had a plethora of data incorporated into dashboards that were difficult to understand. In recent years, the College has focused on reducing the number of data indicators while improving data reliability and consistency. Key indicators are published in a data book, included in relevant meeting agendas, and used in other plans such as the Strategic Enrollment Management plan.

The institution is actively seeking continuous improvement of data processes. Conversations with faculty and staff revealed that the recent changes have led to more meaningful data, an improvement over the previous system. Additionally, KCC is currently discussing the implementation of dashboards for repeated data queries. The institution may also want to consider investigating leading indicators, such as credit momentum or completion of gateway courses, to increase responsiveness to emerging institutional trends, in addition to continued use of lagging metrics such as fall-to-fall persistence or completion rates.

There is adequate evidence that that KCC's administration ensures that faculty are involved in setting academic curriculum and requirements through the Curriculum and Academic Standards (CAS) committee. The CAS committee is a standing shared governance committee at KCC that includes nine faculty members and seven staff or administrators. The handbook also explains the curriculum development process including review by academic divisions and advisory committees. Additionally, there is a clear description of what topics should be brought to the CAS committee. In conversations with faculty, it is clear that CAS mostly discusses curriculum topics, however a review of minutes from the CAS committee indicates that members are engaged in reviewing other academic requirements including a multiple measures framework for placement into math and English coursework.

There is sufficient evidence to indicate that staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements through involvement in program advisory committees. KCC maintains a roster of program advisory committees that includes many staff members and student representatives. Additionally, KCC actively seeks broader input on such topics as the creation of general education outcomes.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Rating

Met

Rationale

KCC effectively demonstrates that it has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support operations. The College utilizes clear position descriptions that describe job duties as well as reasonable education and experiential requirements of positions. Additionally, the academic deans play an integral role on campus by ensuring that programs have sufficient resources, evaluating applicability of courses to different instructional modalities, and evaluating instructional qualifications. The College's information technology team is well qualified and provides an infrastructure sufficient to meet the demands of instruction wherever and however programs are delivered. This includes supporting key resources to help the academic and student affairs departments meet their objectives.

There is clear evidence that the goals incorporated into KCC's strategic plan are realistic in light of the institution's resources. The College's strategic plan demonstrates clear objectives. Other college plans such as the master facilities plan, and the technology plan are constructed around the same goals as the strategic plan and demonstrate clear alignment. Through interviews with KCC staff, it is clear the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan is a key planning document for not only student affairs but the institution as a whole. Several employees were readily able to cite the importance of that planning structure and how it has been used to improve student success.

The College's resources are adequate to meet the goals of these plans. According to the 2024 institutional update, KCC's FY24 primary reserve ratio is 0.74 (0.39 in FY21), with a viability ratio of 3.24 (1.16 in FY21), and an overall total composite financial indicator score of 6.81 (3.24 in FY21). Through the FY21, FY22, and FY23 financial statements, KCC has increased its net position over the past few years, along with increasing end-of-year cash and cash equivalents.

KCC has strong practices in place for developing the budget. The budget development process is clearly articulated in a flow chart that includes multiple layers of input and a cross reference to the strategic plan. Additionally, faculty and staff described the budget request process that includes

explaining alignment of the request with the College's mission, goals, and SEM plan prior to submitting the request. College revenues are budgeted based on conservative, worst-case scenario planning. In this planning, the finance department considers worst-case scenarios in enrollment, flat tuition rates, decreasing state funding, and incorporates other data sources including the higher education price index (HEPI), local unemployment rates, and historical data to create multiyear projections. The visiting team commends KCC for the thoroughness of revenue projections.

The College also has well-developed processes for managing the budget. Budget managers have access to a self-service budget portal to review current spending and balances. These managers are trained annually in using the software. Additionally, the accounting department prepares the monthly budget-to-actual reports for the operating funds. The ability to monitor budget balances was confirmed by multiple employees.

There is clear evidence that KCC dedicates resources to ensure its educational purposes are achieved. According to the FY21, FY22, and FY23 financial statements as well as the FY24 budget, KCC has dedicated between 41%-53% of its expenses to instructional cost, academic support, student services, and public services.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
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, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Kankakee Community College's mission of "enhancing quality of life through learning" is operationalized through five key goals and is integrated into key institutional plans. According to the FY25 budget, the College uses "its shared governance structure to identify and prioritize short-range action plans...aligned with long-term goals." This includes using its committee structure such as President's Cabinet, Strategic Enrollment Management, Curriculum and Academic Standards, Student Learning, Program Review, Learning Environments, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. According to the same document, shared governance committees identify and recommend action plans to the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee (SPOC).

KCC's well-defined budget planning process culminates in a budget book that clearly delineates categories of budgeted spending and includes the source of strategic recommendations, description of the initiative, and the amount of dollars budgeted for the initiative. The initiatives are categorized according to either student learning initiatives or one of the five strategic plan goals. During criterion five open forum, this information was confirmed through descriptions of several initiatives including using demographic trends to increase support for native Spanish speakers. Further support of allocating resources in alignment with institutional mission includes the College's last three audited financial statements where instruction cost, academic support, student services, and public services accounted for 41%-53% of the institution's expenses.

These processes demonstrate that KCC adequately links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, as well as planning and budgeting. From the assurance argument, budget managers and administrators "specifically review data from assessment and program review...as well as changes to any related operations" during the budget development process.

Examples of KCC linking processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting include hiring a reading specialist in response to general education assessment that noted a deficiency in reading comprehension. Faculty and staff revealed other examples including allocating resources for embedded tutoring into mathematics courses. Once the effectiveness of that initiative was confirmed, embedded tutoring was replicated for courses in anatomy and physiology.

KCC has effective planning processes that encompass the institution and consider perspectives of both internal and external constituent groups. In 2018, the College engaged in a strategic planning process using the Six Sigma SIPOC framework that includes identifying suppliers, inputs, process, outputs, and customers. This process included such inputs as labor market analysis, focus group and surveys of external partners and students, feedback from faculty and staff, as well as results from strategy mapping. Other inputs included institutional data related to enrollment, student success, employee data, community data, and accreditation information. This planning process led to the FY20-22 strategic plan that was later reaffirmed and extended to FY25. It also appears that KCC has achieved the creation of a 'living' plan as evidenced by updating the document with completed action plans and listing current activities.

It is clear that the institution's processes and plans account for evolving external factors. As previously noted, changing of demographics led to the addition of Spanish-speaking roles at the institution. Additionally, the institution uses a variety of data sources to compile best- and worst-case financial scenarios that were previously described. Confirmed in interviews on-site, these scenarios form the backbone of the budget development process. Additionally, conversations with information technology staff indicate that they have remained current in technologies and have incorporated good practice into managing their information technology infrastructure. These practices include multiple security measures including network segmentation and incorporating disaster recovery plans into everyday operations. The institution carefully weighs requests for new software and recommends the best way to implement such software to ensure access to actionable data. This was demonstrated through the integration of KCC's Technology plan with their SEM plan to implement Ellucian Advise software.

There is robust evidence that Kankakee Community College implements plans to systematically improve operations and student outcomes. The College maintains operational plans that are incorporated into annual work plans, and maintains a focus on these operational plans, especially the SEM plan. Funding of the initiatives is clear through the budget book and through interviews with staff, the institution's plans are implemented methodically and with appropriate resources. Furthermore, during a community stakeholder open forum, key partners described several occasions where KCC was able to either expand programming or improve programming (e.g., Early Childhood, Diesel Engine Technology, Mental Health Technician) to meet community needs in an efficient manner that exceeded their expectations.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Rationale

It is clear the Kankakee Community College's structures, processes, and planning are sufficient to fulfill the College's mission. KCC implements shared governance through a committee structure that is clearly outlined. Throughout the planning process, administration has improved its use of data since its last review. The institution is encouraged to continue improving data use by reviewing potential leading indicators of student success. Furthermore, conversations with staff indicate a desire and ability to follow-through with continuous quality improvement processes.

KCC's budgeting process is aligned with the college's integrated planning efforts. Through the well-defined budgeting process, key initiatives aimed at improvement in educational and operational quality are clearly identified and described. Financial staff at the College are also adept at scenario planning that incorporates several key data sources to make informed projections. Similarly, information technology staff clearly indicate an ability to respond to future developments and challenges within the modern technology environment.

Therefore, the visiting team concludes that Criterion 5 is met.

FC - Federal Compliance

Rating

Met

Federal Compliance Filing Form

- FedCompFiling_2024_FRM_10_9_24

Rationale

1. ASSIGNMENT OF CREDITS, PROGRAM LENGTH AND TUITION

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The assignment of course credits at Kankakee Community College (KCC) is governed by a comprehensive policy premised on, and compliant with, a corresponding policy of the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). The KCC policy covers standard lecture courses and courses with laboratories. Further, KCC implements a course scheduling policy that governs how courses are to be scheduled in compliance with the established credits policy.

A review of the full KCC course schedule for the 2023-2024 academic year revealed that the vast majority of courses adhered to the published course scheduling policy, and that courses across various instructors and meeting schedules (e.g., T-TH vs. M-W) were consistently scheduled given their associated credit hours. Additionally, meeting schedules for same-credit courses that met for different lengths during a given semester (e.g., a course that meets only the second half of the semester) were appropriately modified. While anomalies exist in both the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 schedules, none of the issues rise to major concerns. KCC is encouraged to be diligent in its review of the course schedule to ensure full compliance with its scheduling and credit hour policies.

A review of a sample of course syllabi indicated that there is both expected and, in some cases, unexpected variation across courses taught by multiple faculty, or taught at multiple locations, or via various modalities. Review results include the following:

- Most online courses employ a standard syllabus template, making the presentation of similar information consistent across courses and sections. The template, however, lacks standard section(s) devoted to the course format/modality/meeting schedule.
- Stated student learning outcomes are presented fairly consistently across sections regardless of instructor, modality, location, etc. The reviewer noted two exceptions:
 - For two reviewed sections of ELTR 1004: Only one of the syllabi included the course

learning outcomes. However, this syllabus did not include a detailed course schedule, while the other did.

- Two PSYC 1813 sections presented slightly different course learning outcomes.
- Course agendas (what teaching/learning will happen in a given week during the term) were generally consistent across sections of the same course. Some sections included detailed weekly/daily topics; others did not.
- In Spring 2024, there was a notable discrepancy in the weighting of various types of assignments/assessments across two sections of HLTH 1312: Medical Terminology (2 credits). While that is not always an issue (given faculty academic freedom, etc.), of note is that the in the dual credit section (7D1), only 40% of the grade was based on exams or similar summative work -- while another 40% of the grade was based on "attendance, participation, work ethic, cooperation, staying on task, and other workplace skills." For the non-dual credit section of the same course (W01), 73% of the final grade was based on exams; in this latter section, no points for attendance/participation/cooperation/etc. were awarded.

The syllabus review confirmed that KCC is materially compliant with its own credit hour and course scheduling policies, and those of HLC.

KCC's programs' lengths are governed by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), which requires colleges to regularly evaluate programs and their lengths every five years. KCC maintains records of those reviews in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment. No ICCB concerns were identified.

KCC did not address in its Federal Compliance Filing how or where it publicly discloses its tuition and fees, as well as related refund policies. However, the reviewer did confirm via a review of KCC websites that KCC very clearly provides this information to all interested constituents. Just one click from the KCC home page is a full, and clear, treatment of its tuition and fees; included on that page is a section addressing refunds, available payment plans, etc.

2. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR HANDLING STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

KCC has a transparent Student Complaint Policy, published as part of its online *Academic Catalog*. The policy affords students the opportunity to submit three distinct types of complaints: for issues related to instruction/grades, non-instructional/general issues, or for discrimination or sexual harassment. The complaint process includes the opportunity to appeal if the complainant feels that due process was not provided in the adjudication of the complaint. Additionally, the KCC Student Complaint Policy informs students of their rights to submit complaints directly with the Illinois Board of Higher Education or the U.S. Office for Civil Rights; links for each are provided.

3. PUBLICATION OF TRANSFER POLICIES

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

KCC's policies governing the transfer of credit are published in its *Academic Catalog*; the policy is clear and well-articulated, establishing from which kinds/levels of institutions KCC will accept credit in transfer. The policy makes clear what minimum grade must be earned for a course to transfer, as well as how potential credit from international institutions will be addressed. The policy indicates that courses may transfer as either equivalent to specific KCC courses or as elective credit. On its Transfer Services webpage, KCC also publishes details of its agreements with multiple four-year institutions with which it has agreements for students' transfer in further pursuit of their bachelor's degrees.

4. PRACTICES FOR VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

KCC takes appropriate and industry-standard steps to ensure that the institution verifies the identity of students enrolled in distance education courses/programs, as well the identify of on-campus students as they engage in LMS-based work via the Canvas system. Multiple institutional policies govern this and related information/data security issues.

Access to KCC's online LMS platform, Canvas, is strictly controlled, requiring both a secure login ID and corresponding password – both of which are issued to students only after their admission. Passwords are required to be changed every 90 days. Attempts to access the system via either an errant username or password are capped at five, after which the account will be locked an hour before being opened again. Additionally, KCC systems utilize multi-factor authentication to further strengthen the student identity verification process. There are no separate costs or fees to students associated with KCC's student identity verification process.

5. PROTECTION OF STUDENT PRIVACY

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

KCC has a clearly stated FERPA policy published publicly as part of its Catalog. KCC has formally designated the Registrar to directly supervise and coordinate the protection of student educational records; disciplinary records are under the protection and management of the Vice President for

Student Affairs.

Additionally, all new employees are provided FERPA-related training as part of new employee orientation programs and are required to sign a FERPA compliance and confidentiality waiver. The waiver provides explicit instructions on how staff are to respond to various requests for access to student records – including access by KCC employees who are parents, spouses, partners, friends, or relatives of any kind of a KCC student. Staff in areas that work regularly with student records are provided additional training and oversight related to this work.

6. PUBLICATION OF STUDENT OUTCOME DATA

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

KCC has a newly updated "Student Right to Know" web page accessible under a "Student Outcomes" heading on its "Consumer Information and Disclosures" web page. The page is well-designed and makes the data presented quite clear for users. However, some of the data is outdated, and some categories of data are incomplete.

For example, graduation and transfer-out rate data are presented for only one entering fall cohort (2020); offering data from multiple cohorts would be far more illustrative (although not a stipulated HLC requirement). Further, the data do not include the fall 2021 cohort, which could now be included given those rates would, presumably, have been known by late summer 2024. Graduation and transfer-out rates are also presented only per the 150% time for completion threshold -- which is what is reported to IPEDS, but not always what students, families, and others think of when evaluating such data; while not a stipulated HLC requirement, also including those rates per the 100% threshold would be even more helpful.

Sub-cohort graduation and transfer-out data (by race/ethnicity, gender, and athletic participation status) are also provided for the Fall 2020 cohort.

First-to-second year student retention data is provided for five cohorts -- with the most recent the fall 2022 cohort.

Sub-cohort first-to-second-year retention data is only disaggregated by students' attendance status (full-time vs. part-time); breakouts by race/ethnicity or gender are not provided.

Additionally, KCC's Student-Right-to-Know web page includes a clear link to additional data about the graduation rates, licensure exam pass rates, and job placement rates for graduates of KCC programs that prepare students to practice professionally in fields governed by either state or national licensure requirements. Most of the programs provide data on multiple cohorts of graduates (some through 2024, while others just through 2023).

Some of this program data is more limited. For example:

- For the Registered Nursing AAS program, licensure pass rates are provided for 2014 through

2019 -- but not after that. And while it is noted that "current job placement" is at 100%, it is not clear for what year(s) that is the case.

- For the Practical Nursing Certificate Program, NCLEX licensure pass rates are provided for 2013-2019 only. While it is noted that "current job placement" is at 100%, it is not clear for what year(s) that is the case.
- For the EMS Program (offered via Riverside Medical Center), the most recent year of data provided was 2021. (p. 8)
- For the Respiratory Therapy AAS program, the year(s) associated with multiple data points -- including the retention rate, and job placement rate -- are not provided. (p.6)

As an exemplary the Physical Therapy Assistant AAS program reports data on graduates who completed the program both within the "normally expected time" (100%) and those who completed the program within the 150%-time threshold.

KCC is encouraged to publish more data, and more updated data, in support of its work to meet the transparency expectations for students and other consumers upon which the HLC's requirements are premised.

7. STANDING WITH STATE AND OTHER ACCREDITORS

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

Multiple programs at KCC hold program-specific accreditation via five discipline/profession-specific national accreditation bodies. KCC offered assurance that there are no pending or final actions by any of these accreditors that constitute a sanction, show-cause order, or adverse action; that assurance was confirmed by independent analysis of data from the accrediting bodies directly.

However, one related issue warrants note. While KCC advertises its Paramedic A.A.S. program as accredited by CAAHEP, CAAHEP itself does not list that program as related to KCC; rather, it lists it solely as a program run by the Riverside Medical Center of Kankakee, IL; the most recent re-accreditation confirmation letter from CAAHEP confirms this. This discrepancy warrants reconciliation.

8. RECRUITING, ADMISSIONS AND RELATED ENROLLMENT PRACTICES

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

KCC's policy environment and related training requirements for both (a) all employees and (b) specific groups of employees engaged in specific student-facing work are robust. Policies and

procedures governing student admission are addressed as part of training protocols for admissions and advising professionals. Training for financial aid professionals employs institution-developed materials as but also draws upon training and policy resources of the U.S. Department of Education, as confirmed as part of this review. During New Employee Orientation, all new employees learn from campus leaders about KCC's mission, "Culture of Caring," DEI commitments, FERPA and Title IX compliance, information/cyber security, etc. KCC also supports their employees' continuous improvement and training via membership in key regional and national professional associations.

NOTE: THE SECTIONS BELOW ARE NOT APPLICABLE TO KCC'S REVIEW

APPENDIX A: TITLE IV PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Complete this section **only if** the institution has submitted an Appendix A. Review any negative actions taken against the institution since HLC's last Federal Compliance review and identify any implications for the institution's current compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or other HLC requirements. Provide a detailed rationale for any Core Components identified as Met with Concerns or Not Met.

Rationale:

-

MANDATORY REPORTING: FRAUD, ABUSE OR FAILING TO MEET TITLE IV RESPONSIBILITIES

Federal regulations require HLC to notify the U.S. Department of Education related to the following item. Do not skip this section.

In the course of the peer review team's evaluation of this institution, have the reviewers encountered any reason to believe that (i) the institution is failing to meet its Title IV, Higher Education Act program responsibilities (if the institution participates in Title IV, HEA programs) or (ii) that the institution may be engaged in fraud or abuse?

Answer (Choose one response and delete the other):

Yes

No

Rationale (If the team responded "Yes," explain the reasons for concern in detail. Otherwise, leave this section blank.):

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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

Review Summary

Conclusion

The visiting team conducted a comprehensive 10-year review of Kankakee Community College (KCC) on November 18-19, 2024.

The team found the KCC mission “enhancing quality of life through learning” to be appropriate, well-articulated and operationalized throughout the institution. In all on-site meetings constituents were able to describe how the mission drives the decisions of the College and how it impacts their work.

The team observed a culture of respect and care for students and among employees that indicates KCC embodies its mission. Additionally, community partners expressed admiration and appreciation for the College and how it is responsive to needs and opportunities. Some members of the faculty did express a desire for a closer working relationship through regular meetings with the President and representation with both the Board and Executive Cabinet.

It is apparent KCC strives to provide a rigorous education of consistent quality regardless of modality or location. The team reviewed course and program outcomes, consistency of syllabi across instructor types and modalities, assessment processes, and minimum qualifications for faculty. Learning goals for degree programs and associated certificate programs are articulated and differentiated, but it is recommended that there be a better clarification between an “area of study” and “program” in the Academic Catalog and other publications. The visiting team commends the College for keeping current its technology, classrooms, labs, and equipment for students to be prepared for success in the workplace.

KCC shows commitment to quality assessment for both curricular and cocurricular programs. The College evaluates the success of its graduates and works with industry and educational partners to make sure the education offered is current for workforce needs or transfer. Goals for retention and completion set through the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan are ambitious but attainable, and the College makes good use of data to put action plans in place that have led to measurable improvements in enrollment and persistence.

KCC structures, processes, and planning are sufficient to fulfill the college's mission, and the budgeting process is aligned with the college's integrated planning efforts. Employees and community partners credited KCC with operating in a fiscally conservative manner, while also maintaining and improving infrastructure, providing for immediate and long-term needs, and embracing opportunities.

The Team concludes that KCC has Met all the Core Components. Further, it is the judgment of the Team that KCC should remain eligible to select its pathway.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met

Sanctions Recommendation

No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation

Eligible to choose

Federal Compliance

Met

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

INTERNAL

Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Worksheet

Review Details

Institution: Kankakee Community College, Illinois

Type of Review: Open Pathway - Comprehensive Evaluation Visit

Description:

Review Dates: 11/18/2024 - 11/19/2024

☐ No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements

Accreditation Status

Status: Accredited

✓ No Change

☐ Recommended Change:

Degrees Awarded: Associates

✓ No Change

☐ Recommended Change:

Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2015 - 2016

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2024 - 2025

☐ No Change

✓ Recommended Change: 2034-2035

Accreditation Stipulations

General:

The institution is approved at the following program level(s): Associate's

The institution is not approved at the following program level(s): Bachelor's, Master's, Specialist, Doctoral

☒ No Change

☐ Recommended Change:

Additional Locations:

Prior HLC approval required.

☒ No Change

☐ Recommended Change:

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

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

☒ No Change

☐ Recommended Change:

Competency-Based Education:

☒ No Change

☐ Recommended Change:

Pell-Eligible Prison Education Program:

☒ No Change

☐ Recommended Change:

Accreditation Events

Pathway for Reaffirmation of Accreditation: Open Pathway

☐ No Change

☒ Recommended Change: eligible to choose

Upcoming Reviews:

No Upcoming Reviews

- ✓ No Change
- ☐ Recommended Change:

Upcoming Branch Campus or Additional Location Reviews:

No Upcoming Reviews

- ✓ No Change
- ☐ Recommended Change:

Monitoring

Upcoming Monitoring Reviews:

No Upcoming Reviews

- ✓ No Change
- ☐ Recommended Change:

Institutional Data

Academic Programs Offered:

Undergraduate Programs		
Associate Degrees:	25	<div>✓ No Change</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:</div>
Baccalaureate Degrees:	0	<div>✓ No Change</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:</div>
Graduate Programs		
Master’s Degrees:	0	<div>✓ No Change</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:</div>
Specialist Degrees:	0	<div>✓ No Change</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:</div>
Doctoral Degrees:	0	<div>✓ No Change</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:</div>

Certificate Programs		
Certificates:	97	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Change <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:

Contractual Arrangements:

No Contractual Arrangements

☒ No Change

☐ Recommended Change:

Off-Campus Activities

Branch Campuses:

No Branch Campuses

☒ No Change

☐ Recommended Change:

Additional Locations:

North Extension Center (NEC), 450 N Bradley Blvd, Bradley, Illinois 60915 United States

Manufacturing & Industrial Technology Center (MITC), 2580 S. Route 45/52, Kankakee, Illinois 60901 United States

Harold and Jean Miner South Extension Center, 1488 E. Walnut St., Watseka, Illinois 60970 United States

☒ No Change

☐ Recommended Change: