Hawkeye Community College

HLC ID 1236

OPEN PATHWAY: Mid-Cycle Review   Review Date: 6/14/2021

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Context and Nature of Review

Review Date

6/14/2021
Mid-Cycle Reviews include:

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

Reaffirmation Reviews include:

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

Scope of Review

- Mid-Cycle Review

- COVID-19 Response Form

Institutional Context

Established in 1966 as Hawkeye Institute of Technology, Hawkeye Community College (HCC) currently serves more than 25,000 individuals each year through a wide variety of educational programs and services. Over the past 55 years, the college has graduated more than 50,000 students, and 94 percent of graduates remain in Iowa. With a main campus in Waterloo, HCC has a service district that includes ten counties located in northeast Iowa. The population of this service district is approximately 200,000. The main campus in Waterloo includes 14 classroom and administrative buildings, including a farm and about 100 acres adjacent to the College. HCC also operates six learning centers throughout its service district.

HCC had 5,042 students enrolled in credit programming in the fall of 2020. The College offers more than 49 associate degree programs including technical programs and university transfer programs. Courses are offered in face-to-face, hybrid, and online formats. The College also provides early college credit courses to high school students. In addition, the College offers adult basic education, high school equivalency certificates, adult high school programs, English language learner classes, and U.S. citizenship preparation. HCC's Business and Community Education Division offers non-credit and credit to non-credit programming to the public and to external organizations through contracted training programs.

HCC was granted accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission in 1975, and its most recent reaffirmation of accreditation occurred in 2016-2017. Following the 2017 visit, HCC was required to complete an interim report on effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of institutional learning outcomes and program learning outcomes. This report was submitted in September 2019. This report was accepted by the Higher

Learning Commission with the acknowledgement that although much progress had been made on assessment of student learning outcomes, further attention continues to be required in this area.

The current Mid-Cycle Assurance Review occurred virtually from June 14 to July 12, 2021. The next Comprehensive Evaluation is scheduled for 2026-2027. At this time, the team concludes that all core components are met. The review team noted that further progress had been made in assessment of student learning outcomes in the classroom; however, HCC has yet to implement any assessment of its co-curricular activities. The College also appears to be in early stages relative to implementing its strategic plan to systematically improve operations and student outcomes.

Finally, this review also included an examination of HCC's COVID-19 response form. Although the College experienced decreases in enrollment in the fall of 2020 and the spring of 2021, student enrollment appears to be rebounding in the 2021 summer session. During the 2020-2021 academic year, HCC continued to serve students through online courses, hybrid courses and traditional classroom, and laboratory instruction. Students, faculty and staff wore PPE and adhered to social distancing recommendations.

Interactions with Constituencies

Since this was a virtual review, contact with constituencies was limited to email communication with HCC's senior administrators.

Additional Documents

Additional documents requested by the review team are in the Addendum.

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

Hawkeye Community College (HCC) has a clear mission statement that is communicated throughout the College and community. The mission, vision, and strategic statements are consistent with programmatic and student support offerings, needs of the community, and stakeholder relationships. The vision statement and strategic plan are tied to the mission and form the foundation of the work of the College.

HCC's new president began his tenure in 2019. Under the new president's leadership, HCC started gathering feedback through open town hall meetings with college constituents, including students, faculty, staff, and community members. In fall 2020, an external consulting firm was hired to assist with the development of a new strategic plan. This inclusive process involved listening sessions, interviews with business and community leaders, student survey feedback, and focus groups with faculty and staff. Representation from various sectors of the College was gathered to form a Strategic Planning Committee. As a result of this process, a new mission statement, vision statement, and strategic plan were developed, and these documents were adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2020.

Therefore, HCC's mission is current and highlights its emphasis on students, businesses, and communities. The mission is stated as "Empowering students, strengthening businesses, and enriching communities." HCC's commitment to its students is demonstrated through career and

transfer programs, short-term training programs, specialized accreditations, and student support services. HCC works to strengthen businesses in its area through specialized partnerships, job training and retraining programs, and apprenticeships. HCC is committed to enriching its local communities through its concurrent high school offerings, vaccination clinics, and continuing education opportunities.

HCC's three strategies that focus on diversity and inclusion; opportunities for education; and pathways for student success are each delineated in the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan with respect to the College's four broad constituencies: students, business, community, and internal. HCC's engagement with its communities, as demonstrated by increased concurrent offerings, commitment to an Inclusion Center, and plans for a new solar power field, underscore the College vision statement of "Improving the quality of life within its communities." HCC demonstrated its dedication to its communities by offering PPE and respirators to area hospitals that faced critical shortages during the pandemic. The College's Auto Collision department also donated N95 masks to the local fire department.

HCC offers several support services to its students through its newly developed Division of Student Affairs. Some of the offices within this division include Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Life, Student Health Services, Athletics, and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. These offices provide support to both prospective and currently enrolled students. Many of these offices pivoted to offering virtual services and support during the COVID-19 pandemic. Admissions counselors worked via online platforms to conduct virtual advising sessions and orientation. The Financial Aid and Foundation Offices worked to provide opportunities and administer aid to students in need. During the pandemic, HCC provided laptops, other peripherals, and technical assistance to ensure that students could continue to complete their studies. HCC's enrollment profile is consistent with its mission and includes a large number of low income students.

HCC's new mission is aligned with other documents that were created alongside the mission, such as the vision and strategies. The mission statement, vision statement, and strategic plan are posted on the HCC website. The mission and vision are also articulated in HCC's strategic plan. The College's commitment to its mission is apparent through various communication tools, such as the College Viewbook and CONNECT newsletters.

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

As a public community college with oversight provided by the Board of Trustees, HCC's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the College or any superordinate entity. HCC's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors or supporting external interests (see Criteria 2).

HCC is driven by its mission of serving the needs of its community and responds to their needs as capacity allows. In the development of its mission, HCC sought and received input from external constituents such as local businesses, industry, and community leaders. Public listening sessions were utilized to gather feedback. Various documents, such as HCC's strategic plan and descriptions of programmatic offerings and services, showcase the institution's commitment to its educational responsibilities. Examples of community-oriented programming include the Adult Learning Center, youth summer camps, and the COVID-19 vaccination site.

HCC has engaged its community closely in its operations. Consistent with its mission, HCC has utilized its advisory boards to provide feedback for the skills and knowledge necessary to impart upon its students in various programs. The College also served as a pilot site for the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue permits and licenses. HCC has served over 300 businesses and has provided job training and placement services for more than 14,000 workers. HCC has also expanded concurrent partnerships with local high schools.

HCC's Business and Community Education serves as the hub for many of its efforts and relationships with external constituencies, such as business and community partners. The Continuing Education Division provides non-credit offerings in a variety of fields. Many of these programs are industry approved and serve key industry sectors, such as health, trades, manufacturing, and public safety. Offerings are consistent with addressing emerging needs of the local area. For example, the Law Enforcement program recently created programming for public service employees, including community-based policing, and diversity and minority relations.

HCC's Corporate and Business Solutions work with the community to develop specialized training and programs, such as a "Property Handyman Skill Camp" for property owners and webinars for businesses on how to manage during the pandemic. The Workforce Training and Community Development Division connects community members with tuition assistance programs, support services, and pre-apprenticeship programs. The We Build Waterloo program is an example of a pre-apprenticeship programs that provides employers with skilled construction workers through a competency-based educational model.

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

HCC recognizes the diverse needs of its constituency groups and provides educational opportunities for all stakeholders in its community, regardless of race, age, ability, economic status, or other factors. One of the College's institutional learning outcomes is community/global awareness which is described as "students will recognize and appreciate diversity, historical viewpoints, and the global perspective." HCC's assurance argument and website indicate numerous academic programs and co-curricular activities that provide students with diverse opportunities, such as university transfer programs, career and technical education programs, athletics and intramural sports, honor societies, and an international student organization.

There are also opportunities for students to participate in co-curricular activities based on their career interests to better prepare them for workplace success, such as the Criminal Justice Club, Education Club, and Occupational Therapy Club. A review of HCC Board minutes showcases some of the events the College hosted in the 2020-2021 academic year that highlight the College's commitment to provide students the opportunity for civic engagement and leadership in the community. Examples of these include mental health awareness events, the leadership speaker series, and wheelchair basketball.

A review of the evidence shows that HCC regularly collects feedback from students from the time they enter the institution to the time they graduate via surveys. HCC also conducts the CCSSE survey to gather feedback about current student engagement. Data from the incoming student survey shows high scores in the "Early Connections" section, highlighting student agreement with statements such as "The very first time I came to this college I felt welcome" and "At least one college staff member (other than an instructor) learned my name." While overall survey results show positive student feedback related to classroom experiences and interactions with student services, HCC may want to consider disaggregating survey results by various demographic groups, such as race, gender, age, socioeconomic status, and disability. Looking at the data in this manner may help ascertain if different groups are experiencing the college environment, instruction, and support services equitably.

One of the College goals is to "Access sensitivity to diversity, support equal opportunities for all qualified individuals." A review of the documents in the assurance argument and the website provide evidence that HCC is working towards this goal and fostering a climate of respect for students and employees from diverse backgrounds. HCC's Inclusion and Civility Task Force works towards creating a more inclusive environment through policy review, education, and training. Examples of initiatives this task force has introduced include the creation of a "Civility Toolkit," updated policies, and a programming calendar. A review of HCC's website reveals an extensive array of groups, programs and resources dedicated to the diversity, equity, and inclusion. Some examples of these include anti-racism Resources, LGBTQ+ initiatives, "Dare to Dream" scholarship opportunities, and a page dedicated to understanding racial trauma and restorative healing/self-care strategies."

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 mission and vison documents clearly articulate the purpose of Hawkeye Community College as empowering students, strengthening businesses, and enriching communities. The mission and corresponding strategic plan are regularly reviewed and the process of updating these documents is inclusive of stakeholders within and outside of the College. The mission, vision, and strategic planning documents are articulated on the College's website and in documents provided to students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders. HCC offers curricular and cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success, and the College is working to foster a climate of respect among all students, faculty, and staff members from a range of diverse backgrounds. HCC's mission and related statements align with its offerings and services, including academic programs, support services, specialized partnerships, job training and apprenticeships. There are numerous examples of the College's engagement with its community, including the use of advisory groups and programs offered through the College's Business and Community Education Division.

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

HCC is governed by a nine-member Board of Trustees who are elected to four-year terms by voters in the district in which they reside. The College has an orientation process established for new Board members. The Board operates with integrity through established processes and disclosure forms relative to conflicts of interest. Additionally, the College provides each Board member the opportunity to complete an anonymous self-evaluation form to support the integrity and quality of performed work. The Board has established processes that allow them to objectively determine direction for the College president and governance for the institution. The Board also participates in professional development that helps to cultivate continuous quality improvement, national standards, and betterment.

The Board of the Trustees and the College engage with the mission using both internal and external partnerships for development. HCC recently updated its mission statement, vision statement, and strategic plan through a robust and inclusive process involving internal and external stakeholders (see Criteria 1). The Board then formally adopted the new statements at its October 27, 2020, meeting. However, it is unclear if the HCC maintains a regular schedule for revising its mission statement or if it is done upon certain occasions, such as a new president.

HCC operates with integrity and transparency in its financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions. The vice president of administration and finance, in conjunction with the president, oversees the budget development process. The vice president presents monthly financial reports to the Board of Trustees as well as the annual budget. Each year an independent accounting firm audits the College's financial statements, and the audit is provided to the Board of Trustees. Budget information, including expenses and revenues, is accessible to management-level staff. In addition, all financial records can be made available to members of the public through open records requests. HCC's Financial Aid Office administers student financial aid with integrity and consistency

while complying with government regulations. To fully adhere to state and federal guidelines, financial aid operations are audited annually by a third party accounting firm to ensure compliance and integrity.

Integrity in HCC's academic offerings is ensured through its standing committees including the Curriculum Coordinating Committee, Assessment Committee, and Academic Standards Committee. These committees assure faculty oversight of HCC's curriculum and academic programs. The College also maintains a number of accreditations including the Higher Learning Commission, the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships as well as program specific accreditations to assure quality and integrity in its academic programs.

Integrity in human resources is assured through an employee handbook, required employee training in areas such as student privacy and data security, and a series of policies. All HCC employees and the Board of Trustees must abide by a Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct is acknowledged online by all employees annually. HCC's personnel handbook includes policies relative to conflict of interest, nepotism, and privacy of personal information. The Human Resources Office provides a process for anonymous concerns or complaints to be submitted and investigated.

HCC's auxiliary functions include a bookstore, cafeteria, events management, and childcare services. Some of these services are operated by the College while others, including the bookstore and childcare services are outsourced or partially outsourced. The College tracks revenue and expenses for all auxiliary services. However, for those auxiliary functions that are outsourced, the ability to meet the needs of students is considered the most important factor when selecting a vendor as opposed to making decisions to outsource services or select vendors based solely on financial factors.

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

HCC's Board of Trustees uses the Carver Policy Governance Model and publishes all meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, and membership information on the College website. Board meetings are open to the public and College president includes both internal and external stakeholders in meetings as appropriate.

A review of the College website further verified that HCC ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding accreditation relationships, academic offerings, student requirements, and costs to students. The College's accreditation liaison officer monitors compliance requirements and curriculum modifications, and, if necessary, reports changes to the Higher Learning Commission or specialized program accreditation agency. All current accreditation relationships are listed on the HCC website.

The HCC website provides information on admissions requirements for all types of students, including high school, adult, immigrant, veteran, and international students as well as specific requirements for academic programs. The courses required for each academic program are included on the College website as well as career information associated with the program. To ensure consistency in the curriculum, the College uses META software as a repository for faculty and staff. The financial aid section of HCC's website includes student cost of attendance, a net price calculator, and a financial aid handbook. Although there is a college directory accessible from the website, a listing of faculty and staff with their academic credentials was not accessible from the website and had to be requested by the review team.

The College complies with the Integrated Post Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reporting and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The College uses data from IPEDS and NCES for comparative analysis with peers and improvement. The college also participates in the Voluntary Framework of Accountability, the National Community College Benchmark Project, the Center for Community College Survey of Student Engagement, and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE). Survey results and comparative data are used for self assessment and continuous quality improvement.

HCC also uses student survey results to ensure evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through community engagement and experiential learning. As noted in Criteria 1, the College provides a variety of community engagement opportunities. For students in nursing, health, and emergency services programs, these opportunities include an on-site dental clinic, a simulation center, and clinical experiences at area hospitals, clinics and care centers. Experiential learning opportunities are also available to students in the sustainable construction and design program, the hospitality management program as well as the College's agricultural programs. In addition, HCC provides "hands-on" learning opportunities in laboratory settings for all career and technical education programs.

HCC is active in economic development through a number of partnerships described in the assurance argument, and the College validates its contributions to the region and the state through wage and benefit surveys. The College also measures effectiveness of economic development efforts through tracking the number of participants in each program, the number of new jobs created, and the number of businesses served by the College. The College also evaluates its economic development efforts through evaluations of its continuing education courses and outreach programs.

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

HCC's governing board is trained and knowledgeable, and the Board makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices. Board of Trustees members are elected to four-year terms and trained with an orientation session that includes college overview, organization structure, budget, state code, policy, and formality of meetings. There is extensive documentation that solidifies structure for Board practice and legal and fiduciary responsibility, and all Board members are given a Policy Governance Manual during their training session. There may be an opportunity to advance continuous improvement and supplement local and state information by including national professional development from organizations such as the Association of Community College Trustees or the Association of Governing Boards in the orientation process for board members.

The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution. A review of agenda items and meeting minutes from the past four years indicate that the Board is focused on relevant College issues and is apprised of the College's financial status each month. Another standing meeting agenda item is "Board Education" where Board members are informed of college programs, services, and new initiatives. These presentations provide an opportunity for Board members to interact with faculty members, staff members, and students. After each meeting, the trustees complete self evaluations to verify consistency in governance. Further, a summary of the evaluation is provided for discussion and ensures transparency in governance. It should be noted that the Board met virtually in 2020 due to the pandemic.

The Board of Trustees considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the College's key constituencies and provides opportunities for internal and external stakeholders to participate in the deliberations of the College. The Board acts in accordance to the Iowa Open Meetings Law and

provides an inclusive process for decision making. Further, contact information for all Board members, including email addresses and phone numbers, are provided on HCC's website.

HCC's governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, or other external parties. Each Board member is an elected official and must act in accordance to Iowa State Law. The Board maintains a conflict of interest policy, and the standing agenda item "Declaration of Conflict of Interest" allows Board members to declare conflicts at each Board meeting. Further, Board Policy GP-5, Board Members' Code of Conduct, provides additional information on acceptable conduct for Board members.

Finally, the governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty members to oversee academic matters. The Board employs and empowers the College president to run the institution. The president's responsibilities are documented in accordance with Board policy. The president provides formal monthly reports to inform the Board on key issues and also shares an informal weekly report on college activities.

Faculty oversee academic matters through their participation in the Hawkeye Professional Educator's Association (HPEA) and through participation on standing academic committees, including the Curriculum Coordinating Committee, Assessment Committee, and Academic Standards Committee. The HPEA president receives the monthly board agenda and information packet, and the HPEA leadership team meets at least twice each semester with senior academic leaders to discuss academic issues, and any major issues are shared with the president.

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

HCC is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning as demonstrated by information provided to students and faculty. The College provides documentation through several channels to solidify its commitment to academic freedom. The Student Handbook provides language as guidance on academic freedom including HCC's pledge to protect the communication of ideas that are academically valid, creative, and challenging, as well as points of view that are original and alternative, in all venues and media associated with the College. The Student Handbook states that instructors, students, and any other participants in college-based dialogues will make every effort to utilize information that is timely, factually accurate, and relevant to student learning outcomes.

Similar information on academic freedom is also provided to employees in HCC's Faculty Handbook and in the Personnel Handbook through the College's Free Speech and Expression Policy and in the employee conduct section. HCC supports faculty, staff, and students in their demonstration of academic freedom and encourages that all communications follow guidelines to ensure a safe and respectful learning environment.

Although language promoting and protecting academic freedom and freedom of expression is included in publications designed for students and employees, it is not clear how HCC ensures that every student and employee is made aware of this information. It is recommended that this information on academic freedom and freedom of expression be included in orientation sessions for new students and employees as well as other training and development programs.

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

Although HCC is not a research institution, the College maintains professional standards and provides oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior, and fiscal accountability relative to research conducted by students, faculty, and staff members. The College provides administrative and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarship.

HCC has a designated IRB Committee chaired by the Director of Institutional Research. The institution uses a formal IRB application process to ensure regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability for research projects. The institution tracks funded proposals for institution alignment. The institution uses FERPA guidelines to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.

The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources. HCC library staff members provide students with instruction on the discovery and use of information resources. Approximately 100 information literacy instruction sessions are offered each year to an average of 1,548 students per year for the past decade. Students who complete the instruction report that it is helpful with their studies; however, it is unknown if every student receives this instruction. HCC's library also provides online research guides, including a popular "Fake News" online research guide. Use of these online guides doubled in 2019-2020 after the guides were integrated into Canvas.

In addition, HCC has adopted an Information Systems Policy that includes technology use, passwords, email protocols, incident response, data classification, software licensing, copyright compliance, and data privacy. Information on all of these topics is provided to students in the Student Handbook. However, it is unclear whether all students complete training on safe and appropriate technology usage.

HCC's Student Handbook also includes requirements for students to conduct themselves honestly and with integrity. HCC reinforces these expectations through its Academic Standards Committee. All

students are made aware of these requirements through participation in the College's mandatory orientation and registration program. Further, this information is communicated in numerous courses for new students and through emails from the Dean of Students. Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy are addressed utilizing the Academic Integrity Code Violation Report with documentation sent to the Dean of Students. The College has an appropriate appeal process and notification to the Board for final decision.

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

HCC acts with integrity, and its conduct is ethical and responsible. The College has established and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. HCC recently developed a new mission statement that was formally adopted by the governing board in 2020. The College operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions as demonstrated by policies, audits, complaint processes and other compliance measures. HCC ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, admission requirements, costs to students, governance structure, and accreditation relationships. HCC's Board of Trustees is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with Board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity. The College may want to document how it engages with national organizations such as the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) or the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) to demonstrate broader continuous improvement for the Board of Trustees. A listing of faculty and staff with their academic credentials could be made accessible on the College website so this information is presented clearly and completely to students and the public.

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

HCC provides quality education at all of its locations and in all formats for which its courses are delivered, including face-to-face, online, hybrid and web-live. The institution reviews all courses, as a minimum, on a five-year cycle according to its established curriculum review standards to assure that courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded. Student performance is analyzed and documented annually, as seen in the 2019 Voluntary Framework of Accountability Public Outcomes Report. Student performance expectations align with certificate or degree pursuits as demonstrated by the stackable credentials offered by the institution's welding program and other programs.

The College articulates and differentiates learning goals for many of its certificate and associate degree programs. HCC offers 45 certificate and degree programs across many different areas of study, including agriculture and natural resources, arts, business, education, health, industrial and engineering technology, information technology, power technology, safety services, and transfer programs. HCC has established Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) in CTE-related programs.

The improvements HCC has made in "closing the loop" in its assessment efforts is a solid starting point for expanding PLOs (see Criteria 4). The review team recommends further development and articulation of PLOs across all of the College's academic programs. Established PLOs should serve as a mid-point for mapping CLOs and ILOs. PLOs also help differentiate learning goals for certificate and degree programs and ensure proper alignment with the institution's mission and vision.

Course syllabi are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations offered by the College, including face-to-face, online, hybrid, web-live, and concurrent enrollment, including standardized course goals, learning outcomes, and required textbooks. While allowing instructors the academic freedom to tailor specific learning activities to meet the needs of students, the institution standardizes relevant content within syllabi as seen in its Psychology 111 course and other course syllabi examined by the review team, including syllabi from face-to-face, online, hybrid, and web-live courses. Further, HCC regularly reviews the rigor and content of its concurrent enrollment classes and plans to further standardize syllabi by implementing Simple Syllabus software to improve the quality of education for its concurrent enrollment students.

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

General education requirements for HCC's AAS, AS, and AA degrees are appropriate for the institution's mission and exceed HLC assumed practices for the minimum number of credit hours necessary for their degree offerings as shown in various degree requirement outlines. Each academic program clearly articulates the general education requirements, disclosing to students the mandatory requirements of 15 to 40 credit hours depending on the particular program. General education-specific learning outcomes are included in the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), and the review team recommends separating these out into explicit and formal General Education Outcomes (GEOs). Doing so will strengthen the institution in assessing and improving its general education programming.

The institution's application of Bloom's Taxonomy in its curriculum review process demonstrates the strength of its general education framework. Additionally, ILOs guide curriculum decisions and align program outcomes to workforce and transfer objectives. As established by the Liaison Advisory Committee on Transfer Students, HCC participates in eight statewide transfer agreements as well as individualized articulation agreements among community colleges and public universities in the state of Iowa. ILOs also help align CTE curriculum with statewide Work-Based Learning (WBL) guidelines to better prepare students for the workplace.

HCC's educational offerings expose students to human and cultural diversity in many different ways. Not only are all AS and AA degree-seeking students required to take a social diversity course, but students are also provided with many additional engagement opportunities such as the Cedar Valley

Pridefest, the Hawkeye Reads Program, the We Build Waterloo project, and numerous other cultural activities and programs. The institution demonstrates its commitment to diversity by hiring a Cultural Coordinator and by hosting book signings, guest speakers, art exhibits, and other events focused on human and cultural diversity.

Students and faculty at HCC collaborate to promote opportunities in scholarship, art, and exploration of knowledge. The College's student-run literary magazine, student art exhibit, and Mini-Con Celebration are examples of these efforts for liberal arts majors. Phi Theta Kappa, student-sponsored service projects, and support efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic are additional examples of how students use and apply knowledge and skills in line with the institution's mission.

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

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

Diversity initiatives at HCC range from providing Employee Development Days to encouraging diversity in recruitment practices. The Diversity and Inclusion Council at HCC facilitates an ongoing focus and commitment of cultural diversity across the College. Diversity awards, multicultural volunteer service opportunities, and college initiatives, such as the Summer Bridge Program, reflect the importance of human diversity at the institution. As identified by the College, HCC should continue its efforts to "better reflect the increasing diversity of its student body and surrounding community."

With 110 full-time faculty, 350 adjunct faculty, and 100 dual credit faculty, HCC has the instructional support it needs to provide continuity of classroom and non-classroom functions across the institution. State regulations and faculty bargaining agreements dictate the course load instructors can be assigned. This helps create a balance between classroom responsibilities and other duties, including the committee work provided by instructors for curriculum development and assessment. Faculty are supported by the Brobst Center for Teaching and Learning as well as through the new department chair leadership structure that will be implemented in the fall of 2021.

Faculty qualifications are aligned with HLC guidelines as shown in the additional documentation uploaded to the Addendum of the Assurance Argument. Instructor credentials are also reviewed

every five years by the Iowa Department of Education, and dual credit faculty credentials are evaluated by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships during each re-accreditation cycle. The Iowa Administrative Code also aligns with HLC guidelines on faculty qualifications, and HCC is required to follow these state regulations.

The Faculty Handbook at HCC clearly describes the evaluation process for probationary and non-probationary employees. For new faculty, the evaluation includes an instructional observation and input by the academic dean along with course survey results based on student perception. Iowa Code Section 260C.36 also stipulates that the institution follow a Quality Faculty Plan to guide faculty hiring and professional development. This evaluation continues once every five years for non-probationary faculty. Deans are also able to review faculty activity of online courses in Canvas, and dual credit faculty receive additional evaluations as part of the NACEP accreditation guidelines.

HCC is committed to ongoing faculty professional development and facilitates many instructional trainings through the Brobst Center for Teaching and Learning. This training includes Magna Seminar Series programming, COVID-19 training specific to instructional needs during the pandemic, and Quality Matters training for online learning. In addition to the 814 professional development sessions provided by the Brobst Center for Teaching and Learning, faculty are also encouraged to participate in external professional associations and conferences.

Faculty at HCC are required to hold at least five office hours each week and may adjust these hours to best accommodate students through face-to-face or virtual options. Office hours for each instructor are posted in course syllabi, outside of physical offices, and online.

College staff are provided with numerous opportunities for professional development, including a tuition reimbursement of up to six credits per year. In addition, CIS staff are encouraged to earn IT certificates, and all staff members are provided opportunities for Safe Colleges training. Student Services employees participate in the Iowa Community College Student Services Association and join department-specific regional and national professional associations. Staff supervisors participate in the leadership development program, Hawkeye LEAD.

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

HCC provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching, including courses delivered in face-to-face, online, hybrid and web-live formats. Student support services at HCC are comprehensive and include student accessibility services, financial aid, student tutoring and computer lab, library services, laptop and hotspot checkout, orientation and registration, career services, the student health center, and the career clothing closet. Additional support services for specific student groups include TRIO support, the summer bridge program, veterans services, and athletics. Emergency-based services include emergency funds, an emergency counseling hotline, a food pantry, and a student care coordinator. Support programs at HCC appear to be well suited to the needs of its student population.

The College 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. Beginning in the fall 2020 semester, students were placed into courses using a multiple methods assessment that considered placement test scores, high school GPA, and prior coursework. This combination of placement factors helped identify the readiness of the student for specific courses. As an alternative to enrolling in developmental classes, students could participate in the Preparatory Academic Lab to help improve their skills. Students also enroll in either a one-credit (SDV 108) or a three-credit (SDV 109) student success course as a form of extended student orientation and skills development.

HCC provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students. Academic advising at HCC begins with Mandatory Orientation and Registration, where students are introduced to the specific academic requirements of their programs. Software tools such as Academic Evaluation, CRM Recruit, and CRM Advise are used to track student progress through the admissions process as well as the through their program progression. HCC uses its advising software tools to flag students through an early alert system and monitors the progress of financial aid students

to ensure they are making satisfactory academic progress. As part of the institution's Guided Pathways initiative, the College plans to implement additional software tools to help students plan their class schedules and stay on track to graduate.

HCC provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning. As part of its robust infrastructure and Master Facilities Plan, HCC has planned or finished several state-of-the-art buildings, including the Van G. Miller Adult Learning Center and Grundy Hall remodel. In addition to new instructional space, improvements also include expansion of the IT infrastructure across campus to support hybrid-enabled classrooms as well as online and web-live instruction. HCC also provides laboratories and experiential learning environments such as student-run cafés, child care facilities, and the HCC Farm Lab. Clinical sites for health programs are located throughout the College's service areas.

In addition, student support services add to the institution's academic infrastructure by providing libraries, computer labs, and study rooms. Other campus amenities include on-campus dining, bookstore, counseling services, health center, athletic facilities, and child care which allow HCC students many conveniences and let them focus on their educational pursuits.

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

Through its accredited programs and its Guided Pathways efforts, HCC provides consistent, high-quality coursework at every location it offers classes and with every instructional modality it uses. Clearly defined Institutional Learning Outcomes steer the college's curriculum development efforts and align with its mission. The rigor of HCC's programs is appropriate for the institution.

HCC's curriculum development and review process ensure currency of course content and relevancy to workforce and transfer objectives. General education requirements are appropriate for the programs offered at the institution and provide students with opportunities to experience human and cultural diversity. Programs at HCC, such as We Build Waterloo, expand students' perspectives and prepare them to engage in a multicultural workplace.

Faculty and staff at HCC are appropriately qualified for their positions and provide students with meaningful instruction and robust student services to support the learning process. Professional development opportunities and training during the pandemic were provided for employees to improve their skills and stay current on advancements in their fields.

The instructional infrastructure at HCC provides ample resources and support for effective teaching. Recent changes the institution has made regarding new facilities and other improvements to areas like IT infrastructure have positioned the College for future success. Current teaching, learning and student success initiatives should lead the institution in a positive direction going forward.

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

HCC maintains a practice of regular program reviews for some academic programs. Reviews are conducted every five years for the career and technical programs. The College developed a software program, Proview 2, that is used to facilitate a comprehensive review of each program. After faculty members have submitted their program information, the report generated is reviewed by the assessment co-chairs, dean, and the Academic Affairs Vice President (AAVP). A meeting is then held where the AAVP shares recommendations for improvement with the dean and faculty members. Faculty members then are charged with implementing these recommendations within the next year. Although the examples of the AAVP's recommendations appear logical, the process may be more meaningful if the faculty generate their own recommendations for improvement based on their own review of the narratives and data.

Although technical programs are reviewed on a regular cycle, the liberal arts discipline reviews have not been conducted for more than four years. Although these reviews are scheduled to begin again in the fall of 2022, there was no explanation for what will be a five-year hiatus from liberal arts discipline reviews.

HCC has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer and evaluates all the credit that it transcripts. All student transcripts are reviewed upon receipt and credits are evaluated. To ensure consistency, the College's Records and Registration Office assists in transfer credit evaluation using Transferology, an online transfer credit database. Additionally, course syllabi are used as tools to evaluate learning outcomes that must match a minimum of 80 percent of course content for acceptance. HCC also requires that international students have their official foreign transcripts translated and evaluated by a professional evaluation service.

HCC maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, and access to learning resources for all of its courses, including dual credit courses. As the College implements Guided Pathways, program planning pages, including course sequences and course prerequisites, are outlined on the College website. High school relations staff work with counselors at high schools to ensure dual credit students understand course prerequisites during the registration process. All dual credit courses are equivalent to HCC college courses relative to learning outcomes and levels of achievement.

The College uses a standard syllabus template, and in the fall semester of 2021, HCC will implement Simple Syllabus software for all credit classes. Through the use of this software, all syllabi will automatically include current course goals, outcomes, institutional learning outcomes, and other standardized course information and policies.

The College verifies faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. The academic deans review credentials to certify that concurrent enrollment instructors meet State of Iowa faculty qualifications as well as requirements set forth by the National Alliance for Concurrent Partnership and the Higher Learning Commission.

HCC maintains specialized accreditation and/or certification for a number of its health programs including Dental Hygiene, Medical Lab Technician, Medical Assistant, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Physical Therapist Assistant, Respiratory Care, and Emergency Medical Services. In addition, a new Childcare Director Training Certificate is approved by the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation Commission.

Finally, HCC evaluates the success of its graduates through numerous methods. The academic program review process requires each program to demonstrate employability of graduates. This is accomplished though advisory board member feedback and an employer satisfaction survey. Graduates also evaluate their job readiness and provide information on their work status through an annual Graduate Employment Survey. Data from the 2020 survey indicates that more than 90 percent of respondents were satisfied with the education they received, and about this same percentage are currently employed and/or furthering their education. It should be noted that this information was collected during the pandemic when rates of employment were lower than average in many career sectors.

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

Since 2017, HCC has spent a great deal of time and resources developing and implementing processes for assessment of student learning. The College began by requiring all faculty members to complete multiple assessment reports each semester that documented that students were achieving objectives at the course, program, and institutional levels. Much of this effort is reflected in a required interim report that was submitted to the HLC in 2019. HLC staff analysis of the report indicated that "the institution has made marked progress in establishing and implementing what appears to be an effective set of procedures for learning outcomes assessment and is to be commended for the work completed to this point. Nonetheless, much of this work is in early stages and will need ongoing oversight by the College. The institution should assume that the HLC Peer Review Team conducting the 2021 Open Pathways Assurance Review will examine carefully the institution's continued progress in assessment."

Over the past two years, from 2019 to 2021, HCC has spent additional time responding to HLC and faculty feedback on assessment of student learning outcomes by refining and streamlining assessment tools, processes, and reporting formats. The assessment reporting shell has been modified to resemble an online class, and the forms for each semester are organized into modules in Canvas, the College's learning management system. The number of forms for faculty to complete was reduced and now consists of a planning form and an end-of-semester report that includes assessing student learning outcomes, assessment data, and information on "closing the loop."

Several other changes have been implemented to further strengthen assessment of student learning outcomes since 2019, including a Plan for Assessing Student Success Guide that has been deployed to guide instructors though the assessment process, a resource module that has been added the assessment reporting shell, and regular announcements in Canvas that inform faculty members of key dates in the assessment process. A faculty fellow for assessment was added in 2018, and the role of that individual has been modified to support the changes listed above.

Efforts over the past four years have led to a steady increase in evidence that assessment information

is being used to improve teaching and learning at the College. HCC has implemented a "Closing the Loop" process where instructors whose assessment results are below expectations develop a plan for improvement, implement the plan in a successive semester, and then assess the changes to determine if student learning improved. In 2017-2018, the first year this process was implemented, 95 instructors completed the form and 57 instructors reported that the changes they implemented improved learning. During calendar year 2020-2021, 192 instructors completed the form with 115 reporting that they had made changes that improved student learning. These changes have been categorized into themes, such as modification of assignments, modifications in teaching methods, or changes in the learning environment. It should be noted that the assessment processes include courses delivered in all formats, including face-to-face, online, hybrid, and web-live; however, the categories for changes appear to relate to only face-to-face courses.

As demonstrated by the statistics above, over the past four years, faculty participation in assessment processes has continued to increase and now involves a significant number of faculty members. One hundred percent of the full-time faculty members have participated in assessment processes over the past three semesters with 92 percent completing all requirements. Eighty-six percent of adjunct faculty members have participated over the past three semesters, and more than half, 53 percent, of dual credit faculty members have participated in assessment processes over the past three semesters. Outreach, training, and professional development continues at the College with a targeted focus on adjunct and high school instructors.

Over the past four years, HCC has also expanded co-curricular offerings for students, and has begun to develop a process to assess these activities. The College is starting a series of surveys for co-curricular events (including speakers, workshops, exhibits, common reading program, etc.) to assess how these events address the institutional learning outcomes of community and global awareness and artistic expression. Although the survey has been developed, the timeline and details for implementation of the survey process were not included in the assurance argument. At this time, the College appears to have no data relative to the assessment of co-curricular programs and activities. It is likely that COVID-19 hindered the implementation of this process, and it is recommended that HCC begin collecting data to assess co-curricular activities as soon as the fall semester of 2021.

In summary, HCC has continued progress in its assessment of student learning in its academic offerings. Through its formal "Closing the Loop" process, the institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning and to document these improvements. Overall, HCC's processes and methodologies to assess student learning in its academic offerings now reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty members. It is clear that HCC has taken recommendations from the HLC and from its faculty members to develop additional tools and training for faculty members and to streamline/simplify assessment processes, forms, and reports. However, as mentioned above, HCC has yet to implement a process for assessing student learning outcomes in its co-curricular programs.

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

HCC has defined some goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings. The College has been engaged in the process of goal setting for the past several years. The most recent document to outline the goals is the College's "Key Performance Indicators 2019-2023 document." This document identifies targeted annual retention and completion rates for full-time and part-time students. It also includes targets for graduation rates of female, minority, international, and low-income students (students who receive Pell Grants). Although the College offers courses in several formats, including face-to-face, online, hybrid, and web-live, there did not appear to be targets related to these delivery methods. For examples, there did not appear to be retention and completion targets for online students.

In general, the College is projecting modest increases in student retention and completion of two to four percent over a four-year period. Although the College does not have specific student retention and completion rates for each academic program, it has identified a target of 93 percent for licensure and certification pass rates, and these licenses and certifications are tied to specific programs. (Higher rates have been recently set for health-related programs). Correspondence with the AAVP indicates that all targets are reviewed annually, and will be examined by the college leadership team again in the fall term with possible adjustments made given the recent COVID 19-situation.

HCC collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs. Retention and Graduation reports are produced for each academic program. These reports include the number of students in each cohort, retention rates by term, as well as graduation rates. The reports also include additional degrees students in the cohort have earned. For example, the

Dental Hygiene Associate Degree program report includes the students who have also completed Dental Assisting Diplomas. This reporting is consistent with the College's Guided Pathway Initiative. The reports also include an analysis of each cohort by gender, race, and ethnicity. As state above, these reports could be enhanced by the addition of retention and completion targets or goals for each program as well as program course success rates segmented by delivery method.

The College uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data. Information, such as the retention and graduation reports, is shared at program advisory board meetings, and is also analyzed during the academic program review process. In 2017, HCC began a Program Exemplar project, and over the past four years a number of programs have realized increases in students persistence, retention, and completion rates. In this program, CTE faculty members meet together in learning communities to share best practices and to identify new retention initiatives to implement for their programs.

Each year, the number of student success initiatives increases, and there are corresponding increases in retention and completion. For example, when comparing the fall 2018 to spring 2019 student retention rates, 79 percent of the programs increased their fall to spring retention rates. Examples of program specific improvements include the implementation of "mock boards" and a dedicated test taking strategies class to help with retention in nursing and health programs.

A college-wide Retention Committee also reviews student retention and completion data and makes recommendations for improvement. Examples of recommendations implemented by the Retention Committee include intensive advising and grade checkpoints. As mentioned previously, the steering committee for the Guided Pathways project also analyzes retention and completion data and has also implemented actions to improve retention and completion including a summer bridge program for at-risk African American students. There are also ongoing initiatives to increase retention and completion rates for student athletes, students in TRIO programs, and other special student populations.

The Student Activities Department supports retention by offering co-curricular activities through a variety of events and activities during the academic year. Over the past year, many activities occurred in collaboration with the Iowa Community College Student Life Hub, a statewide group that hosted virtual activities during the pandemic. As mentioned in 4B, the College would benefit from an assessment of co-curricular activities to determine how these initiatives engage students and address institutional learning goals.

The College's Retention Committee is engaged in ongoing efforts to coordinate all of the student retention and completion initiatives mentioned above. With the goal of building an Academic Success Umbrella, the Retention Committee is gathering information to develop an inventory of retention initiatives to determine overlap and evaluate effectiveness of the various initiatives. The AAVP directs this committee that includes initiatives which are led by faculty and initiatives that are led by student services administrators and staff members.

HCC's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. The College's Records and Registration and Institutional Research Offices work together on data collection and reporting using a number of reports including IPEDS, Management Information System Reporting, Proview2, and the Voluntary Framework of Accountability. As mentioned previously, reports are segmented to track retention and completion rates by gender, race, ethnicity, and income status. This segmentation allows the College to identify achievement gaps and identify appropriate initiatives to address those

gaps, such as the Guided Pathways program. Surveys, including the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, are also used to collect information on student retention, persistence, and completion with results of these surveys used to recognize best practices and identify additional opportunities for improvement.

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

HCC ensures the quality of its educational offerings through a practice of regular program reviews for career and technical education programs, assessment of student learning outcomes throughout the curriculum and maintaining several institutional and program-specific accreditations. As mentioned previously, HCC would benefit by reviewing all academic programs and assessing student learning in co-curricular activities. The college evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, and faculty members exercise authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, and expectations for student learning, including dual credit courses.

HCC has defined targets and goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings. The college shares information on student retention, persistence and completion of its academic programs. There were several examples of how this information was used to instigate improvements in teaching, learning and student support services throughout the assurance argument. Finally, HCC tracks the success and employability of its graduates.

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

HCC upholds the principle of shared governance by engaging stakeholders in its planning processes. This is evidenced by the recently created Pandemic Planning Committee formed to address the campus response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Master Facilities Planning Committee has faculty and staff representation as does the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Faculty and staff are also involved and hold leadership roles in several academic committees, including the Academic Standards Committee, the Assessment Committee, and the Curriculum Committee.

The President's Leadership Council draws on more than 40 people and includes administrators, faculty members, and staff members from across the institution. This council meets bi-monthly to discuss current topics and college initiatives and provides suggestions and recommendations on these issues for the President's Cabinet to consider. Agenda items discussed over the past year include COVID-19, the new strategic plan, and remote work.

Strong evidence exists that the institution uses data in making informed decisions that are in the best interests of the College and its constituents. Tuition and fee rates from other Iowa community colleges, as well as enrollment trends, are used in setting HCC's rates. Data from the other 14 public community colleges was used to align the Add/Late policy allowing students more time to adjust their schedules. Grant proposals are vetted for alignment with institutional priorities via a matrix that is reviewed and approved by the President's Cabinet including final budget review. HCC's

Administration and Finance department uses data to compare college finances with other community colleges through reports such as the annual HCC Financial Audit Report and the annual IPEDS Feedback Report.

While there is strong evidence of faculty and staff involvement on the various college committees and other collaborative groups, there appears to be little student engagement. The Master Facilities Planning Committee developed an inventory of campus spaces to be used to relocate current Grundy Hall occupants during its renovation. This cross-campus representation of faculty and staff made sure to look at all HCC locations to plan for future needs. This committee has done very detailed work on current college facilities but it appears that only faculty, staff and administrators are on the committee and there is no student or community representation.

A number of planning committees have been formed in the last year to evaluate college operations. An Enterprise Resource Planning Governance committee was established to recommend to the President's Council policy and procedures regarding the student information system, as well as focus groups to evaluate how the software is used across campus.

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

HCC has qualified and trained operations staff as indicated by the establishment of hiring guidelines, staff development policies, and related human resource goals. Further evidence is provided by the list showing each employee and their credentials (see addendum). Additional evidence was found in the FY 2020 Iowa State Evaluation that also corroborated adequate and competent staff members.

The College provides evidence supporting attention to facilities and equipment. The recently resumed HCC Master Plan Steering Committee and RDG Planning & Design document identify both short- and long-term facility needs and as well as space utilization. The College is forecasting an overall enrollment decline, and the committee is using data to plan how to best utilize existing facilities including which spaces to take offline. HCC has the technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered. Currently, programs are delivered through four delivery formats, including face-to-face, online, hybrid and web-live. The College has developed goals, benchmarks, and accountability directly related to information technology.

HCC has well-developed budget processes. Each year, the College submits a very high-level "Certified Budget" to the State of Iowa. The process to certify this budget follows very specific guidelines prescribed by the Code of Iowa, Iowa Department of Management, and Iowa Department of Education. The process includes publication of the budget in the local newspaper, a public hearing for community input, and final approval by the Board of Trustees that sets the maximum property tax rate, maximum property tax levy, and maximum expenditure limit from all resources available to the College in the upcoming year. In general, the College's mission and goals (discussed previously in this review) appear realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and processes.

HCC has processes in place for budgeting and monitoring its finances. The Vice President of Administration and Finance holds budget review meetings throughout the year with all budget managers. During these meetings, current expenditures are reviewed for alignment with the College mission, and the next year's requests are also developed with a focus on the institution's mission and

goals to ensure that resources are allocated to support educational purposes.

Finally, the financial statements included with the Independent Auditor's Report provides a comprehensive look at HCC's financial position. The last three year's audits have been "clean" unmodified opinions, and while there have been a few report findings, annual analysis indicates another "clean" unmodified opinion for 2021.

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

HCC provides evidence, which was confirmed, that the institution allocates and aligns resources with its mission and priorities. The College's strategic planning process provides a comprehensive system for establishing priorities that engages internal and external stakeholders at all levels. The planning framework includes all of the components expected in a systematic and integrated planning and improvement system. Further, the annual budget process links budget requests to institutional mission and priorities as described in 5B.

The institution links some processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting. HCC relies on industry advisory boards to assist in aligning instruction and student learning outcomes to industry standards. These boards make formal recommendations that sometimes involve the addition of resources for a specific program. An example was provided in the Digital Mass Media program where the advisory board made recommendations to purchase photography and lighting equipment for the program. These recommendations were then incorporated in the College's annual equipment list for funding. However, it is not clear how results from the assessment of student learning outcomes at the institutional, program or course levels are systematically linked to the annual planning and budgeting processes.

HCC plans on the basis of an understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's enrollment and sources of revenue. In addition to strategic planning and annual budget planning, periodic ad-hoc financial reports as well as institutional research reports are used to help plan for capacity and fluctuations with enrollments and revenues. A review of the 2021-2025 Strategic plan, along with Board meeting minutes and other reports, indicates that the College considers some evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, shifting demographics,

and the changes in the economy, during its planning process.

HCC is beginning to implement its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes. At this time, the 2021-2015 Strategic Plan is in its first year of implementation, so there is minimal evidence to confirm the College is engaged in systematic continuous improvement. However, plans are in place to measure and evaluate progress relative to the new strategic plan. HCC spent considerable time engaging constituents to develop these priories through a comprehensive and inclusive process described in 1A.

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

HCC upholds the principle of shared governance by engaging stakeholders in the strategic planning process. This process is comprehensive and uses multiple meetings, surveys and data sources to develop college priorities and strategies. Shared governance also engages constituencies through committees, policies, procedures, and other collaborative structures although student participation appears to be lacking in some areas of the college.

HCC has qualified and trained operations staff as indicated by the list of employees and their credentials as well as the 2020 Accreditation Report by the Iowa Department of Education. The planning for and attention to facilities, equipment, and technology is supported by current updates to the Facilities Master Plan. HCC is developing a comprehensive Facility Master Plan that will allow the institution to achieve its mission and priorities while optimizing resources, including physical space.

The institution has a process in place for budgeting. Budget documents provide flexibility for requests for funding that are aligned with the College's mission and priorities. However, there does not appear to be a systematic process for linking assessment of student learning results with institutional planning and budgeting. HCC is currently in the first year of implementing its 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, so at this time there is little evidence that the College is systematically improving its operations and student outcomes.

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	

Review Summary

Conclusion

Following a virtual review of the assurance argument and supporting documents that are now included in the addendum, the review team concludes that Hawkeye Community College (HCC) meets each of the core components in the criteria for accreditation. HCC has made considerable progress toward effective assessment of student learning outcomes in the curriculum since submitting an interim report on this core component in 2019. However, the College has yet to begin collecting data to assess its co-curricular activities.

With a new president, HCC spent much of 2019 and 2020 engaging internal and external stakeholders in revising the College's mission and vision and developing a new strategic plan that was approved by its Board of Trustees in October 2020. At this time, the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 is in its first year, so there is minimal evidence to confirm the college is engaged in implementing plans its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes. Further, there does not appear to be a formal linkage between the processes for assessing student learning outcomes and the processes for planning and resource allocation.

Finally, HCC's COVID-19 Response Form indicated that the College addressed the many challenges associated with the pandemic with a focus on student and employee safety. Continuity of instruction and student support services was provided using a variety of delivery systems and methods of communication.

The next Comprehensive Evaluation for HCC is scheduled for 2026-2027.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation
Met

Sanctions Recommendation
No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation
Not Applicable to This Review

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.