

An aerial photograph of the Southeastern Illinois College campus. The main building is a large, multi-story brick structure with a central entrance and a circular driveway in front. To the left of the main building is a smaller, modern-looking building with a glass facade. In the foreground, there is a large pond with a fountain, surrounded by lush green trees and grass. The background shows a flat landscape with more trees and a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds.

2022-2023

# Southeastern Illinois College

Annual Assessment Report

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## Table of Contents

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| <b><i>Introduction.....</i></b>                                | <b><i>1</i></b>  |
| <b><i>The Assessment Committee .....</i></b>                   | <b><i>1</i></b>  |
| <b><i>Assessment Report.....</i></b>                           | <b><i>2</i></b>  |
| <b>Scope .....</b>   | <b>2</b>         |
| <b>Review of 2022-2023 Instructional Plans .....</b>           | <b>2</b>         |
| Humanities, Social Sciences and Fine Arts .....                | 2                |
| Math, Science, and Technology .....                            | 4                |
| Nursing and Allied Health .....                                | 6                |
| Applied Technology.....  | 8                |
| <b>Review of 2022-2023 Co-Curricular Plans .....</b>           | <b>9</b>         |
| Math and Science Club.....                                     | 9                |
| Softball .....   | 10               |
| Athletic Operations .....                                      | 11               |
| <b>Review of 2022-2023 Non-Instructional Plans .....</b>       | <b>12</b>        |
| Marketing.....   | 12               |
| Workforce and Illinois Small Business Development Center ..... | 14               |
| <b><i>Future Steps.....</i></b>                                | <b><i>15</i></b> |
| <b><i>Closing Statements .....</i></b>                         | <b><i>16</i></b> |

## Introduction

The 2022-2023 academic year was another year of changing landscapes and challenges across the higher education. Many institutions, including Southeastern, are still feeling the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, new challenges are emerging in the face of increasing use of technology, particularly the use of artificial intelligence.

In the face of such challenges, Southeastern Illinois College remains committed to delivering quality programs to our students and the communities we serve. Through our assessment process, we can monitor student progress and learning, thus ensuring students are receiving the benefits of their educational efforts. We continue to monitor, evaluate, and improve our assessment processes to help us better address challenges of higher education.

## The Assessment Committee

SIC's assessment committee is a 20-member consortium of administration, faculty, and staff. The committee serves as a major part of SIC's institutional process. The purpose of the committee is to ensure that all instructional and non-instructional programs at the college are routinely and accurately evaluated to improve student learning outcomes.

The assessment committee is directed by the "A Team". This group is chaired by the Executive Dean of Academic Services (Dr. Tyler Billman), a Humanities/Social Sciences faculty member (Clinton Cory Garmane), a Math/Science faculty member/Division Chair (Jason Fitzgerald), and a Diesel Technology instructor/Applied Technology Co-Chair (Robbie Lindhorst). The group is advised by the Vice President of Academic Affairs (Dr. Karen Weiss). The purpose of the "A Team" is to provide leadership to the Assessment Committee.

## Assessment Report

### Scope

Contained within this report is a condensed synopsis of assessment activity from the 2022-2023 academic year. This review will include developments within the Assessment Committee, an overview of assessment plans from selected programs within the instructional, non-instructional, and co-curricular areas, as well as a summary of future assessment endeavors.

### Review of 2022-2023 Instructional Plans

The following paragraphs will provide an overview of the assessment activities for instructional divisions for the 2022-2023 academic year. In most cases, each instructional division will be represented by two individual departments. Assessment plans and results for all instructional departments can be viewed on the College's internal platform, *IntrinSIC*.

### Humanities, Social Sciences and Fine Arts

#### Psychology

Psychology students in PSYC 244 (Human Growth and Development – Lifespan) learned the struggles that parents endure while attempting to raise children, manage a career, and provide a sufficient income. After viewing a video ("Working Parents Find Work/Life Balance Increasingly Difficult") and reading course material, the students wrote an essay explaining the influence that society has on parents while raising children. Students also completed a discussion consisting of an initial post and two replies. The discussions were meant to identify the issues that hinder one's occupation including families, ethnicity, and gender, while relating the results to their personal experience. In both instances, students were expected to score at least 80% on the discussion assignment.



Results show that the PSYC 244 students scored an average of 90% on the essay addressing the effects of society on parents, while raising children and meeting the demands of parenthood. PSYC 244 students also scored an average of 88% on their discussion post assignments, identifying the demands of parents, who attempt to obtain and maintain their careers, while also being challenged due to their ethnic, gender, and work-life balance.

The report author states, “*Considering the success of these outcomes, I will continue to use these assignments to ensure that future students will learn the struggles that parents experience, when trying to balance their careers, relationships, and parenthood.*”

### *Philosophy*

Students in Philosophy 121 were expected to demonstrate an understanding of philosophical aesthetics by composing their own creative responses to philosophers. Students composed a poetic quatrain on a philosopher of their choice. The quatrain is meant to demonstrate formal skill (common measure: alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter, *abcb* rhyme scheme) and concise, philosophical insight on the selected philosopher. A 5-point scale was used to assess the quatrain: 5 (90%-100%); 4 (80%-89%); 3 (70%-79%); 2 (60%-69%); 1 (0%-59%). Successful completion would be indicated by a score of at least 3 (70%). Students also composed a brief philosophical dialogue in response to a painting. After analyzing Raphael’s painting “The School of Athens”, students were to compose a brief dialogue between Plato and Aristotle. The dialogue was meant to be Socratic in nature, reflecting the philosophical insight depicted in Raphael’s representation of Plato and Aristotle, with special attention to their hand gestures. A 5-point scale was used to assess the dialogue: 5 (90%-100%); 4 (80%-89%); 3 (70%-79%); 2 (60%-69%); 1 (0%-59%). Successful completion was indicated by a score of at least 3 (70%).

The results of the first assessment indicated that 50% of the students successfully earned a level 3 or higher. The results of the second assessment indicated that 75% of students earned a level three or higher. For the first means of assessment, data indicated a 12.5% decrease in success rate (62.5 to 50.0) from the last time a similar PHIL 121 assessment was conducted in 2020-2021. Failed attempts generally grasp the key ideas of the chosen philosopher; but students had difficulty articulating these ideas in the assigned poetic form. The assessment plan author states that continued emphasis on the connection between ideas and their rhetorical presentation is required, as this is a necessary skill in multiple disciplines. For the second means of assessment, data indicated a 3.57% increase in success rate (71.43 to 75.0) from the last time a similar PHIL 121 assessment was conducted in 2020-2021.

The report author states, *“Some dialogues composed by students had real wit, accurately capturing the personalities and rhetorical flair of Plato and Aristotle in their disagreements with one another. This assessment suggests a promising avenue to pursue: perhaps have students compose rhetorical imitations of philosophers throughout the semester.”*

## Math, Science, and Technology

### Physics

Students studying physics performed a critical thinking activity and gained experience in using problem-solving methodologies to resolve a presented challenge. To demonstrate this, Students in PHYS 221 were given a prescribed methodology to perform complex calculations. Students were expected to improve by 20% from their first examination to their fourth examination. Additionally, students in PHYS 121 were expected to identify the exact relation of intensity fall off as a bright object becomes more distant from an observer. Success was

achieved if 67% of students correctly identified the relationship between intensity of a light source and the distance from an observer.

Results indicated that students in PHYS 221 improved from an average of 93.5 to 96.8 from their first examination to their fourth examination. This represented a 3.5% increase. The plan author acknowledges that this result is below the expected amount of improvement, but states, *“students were able to score well on their average percentile for their first examination, thus the improvement will be considered a success.”* Results for PHYS 121 revealed that only 7 out of 21 assessed were able to correctly identify the relationship between intensity of a light source and the distance from an observer. This represents only 33% of the class. Based on these results, the report author plans to emphasize the understanding of concepts from lectures prior to their related laboratory exercises.

### Chemistry

Students studying chemistry are expected to demonstrate an increased awareness of how Chemistry affects their lives and social issues. To prove this, students in Chemistry 123 had an in-class discussion of several social/cultural issues related to chemistry. After the discussion, students were to pick one of the issues and write a 1–2-page paper. Success would be achieved if 75% or more of the students received a score of 80% or better on the assignment. Students in Chemistry 121 were given the option of writing a short (1-2 page) paper or preparing a short (5 minute) presentation on a social issue that relates chemistry to their major and/or career goals. To be successful, 75% or more of the students would receive a score of 90% or better on the assignment.

The report author acknowledges that criteria for success was not achieved for either assessment project. Results of the assessment project for Chemistry 123 indicated approximately

70% of the students met the criteria. The plan author credits students not completing all or part of the assignment as the biggest issue. The plan author states, *“I think the major issue with 123 is getting students, especially in the hybrid class, engaged with the material and self-motivated to complete the assignments on time.”* Results for the assessment project in Chemistry 121 showed 35% of students scored 90% or higher. The plan author again credits students not turning in the full assignment or missing the discussion as the key issue. Results were inconclusive. The plan author believes that moving due dates to earlier in the semester combined with a greater emphasis on the importance of chemistry will help the students be more engaged and increase scores.

## Nursing and Allied Health

### *Practical Nursing*

The Practical Nursing students are expected to incorporate new and emerging foundation skills needed to perform tasks proficiently at current business and industry standards. The Next Generation NCLEX (state board exam) launched in April of 2023. The purpose of the update was to better ensure readiness to practice by the new graduate by measuring clinical reasoning ability. In September 2022 (end of NUR 170), PN students completed the Next Generation NCLEX Questions Overview assessment published by Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI). The exercise aims to acclimatize the student to new question formats that will be included in the Next Generation NCLEX. Students completed the activity before taking the pre- and post-tests listed in the second means of assessment. They completed non-nursing, non-challenging exercises that introduced them to the use of drag and drop, drop-down, multiple choice, multiple responses, highlight, bowtie, and trend NCLEX questions.



In July of 2023, after completing the post-test in the second means of assessment, the students would be given a survey indicating whether the ATI exercise prepared them for the nursing-related ATI tests listed in the second means of evaluation. To be successful, 80% of students would need to state that the exercise prepared them well. Additionally, the students were to complete a pre- and post-test that consisted of 40 Next-Gen style questions in the subjects of Adult Medical Surgical Nursing care. The exam items were to be written at the level expected by a newly graduated practical nursing student. An improvement of at least 50% class-wide would indicate success in the areas of clinical reasoning, mastery of Adult Medical Surgical content, and readiness for NCLEX.

Results of the survey showed that 100% of the students polled stated that the Next Gen activity prepared them for the unfamiliar formats introduced in the new NCLEX questions. The results were somewhat difficult to measure accurately due to malfunctioning of the software in the ATI program when the Next Gen formats were first published. The issues were corrected prior to the post-test. The students demonstrated a 65% increase in correct answers. With all of the functions working correctly for the post-test students stated that 40 Next Gen questions were onerous due to the amount of time needed. The faculty would like to continue assessing the effectiveness of ATI in preparing students for the new NCLEX. Results from this year's assessment project were inconclusive.

#### *Certified Nursing Assistant*

Students in the CNA program are expected to apply academic and technical skills in the workforce. To test this, the students were to be tested over the 21 mandatory skills from the BNATP training program, with the steps for performing the skill not in order. Students were to be asked to arrange the steps of the skill in order from first to last. This exercise was to be

completed during the first week of class and again during the final week of class. To be successful, overall scores must average 20% higher from the first to the last exercise. In a second assessment project, students were to be given an exam on pain: acute vs. chronic, what to look for, what to report, pain scales, etc. The exam was to be given during the first week of class and repeated during the final week of class. The exam included 25 questions, and the formats used were mainly fill-in-the-blank with a few multiple-choice questions sprinkled in. Success would be achieved if students' overall scores average 20% higher from the first exam to the last exam.

Results of the first assessment project showed that the average score was 50% at the beginning and 61% at the end of the class. Although the overall scores were not 20% higher, some learning did occur. The second assessment project showed that the average score at the beginning of the class was 71%. The average score at the end of the class was 77%. Therefore, the goal of a 20% increase in overall scores was not achieved. As a result, the report author plans to emphasize pain assessment and pain control measures more heavily in the future.

## Applied Technology

### *Outdoor Wildlife Management*

Students in the Outdoor Wildlife Management Program are expected to meet many goals including demonstrating knowledge about the fundamental laws governing living systems, the composition of matter, and governing nature, as well as demonstrating knowledge of the orderliness of nature as well as develop the ability to evaluate the effects of science and technology on their lives.

Students in OWL 118 Upland Game Bird Management were to demonstrate an ability to identify, via examination, species of North American grouse, ptarmigans, rails, sandpipers, quails, and various types of turkey: both by common name and Biological Genus. To test this,

two picture examinations were to be given, consisting of a PowerPoint file containing fifty high-resolution pictures of various specimens of upland game birds. The images are pulled from the pool of 300 pictures within the study guides on Canvas. To be successful, 80% of students would need to score 85% or above on each examination.

Results indicated 11 students completed the first examination. Seventy-two percent of students scored at or above 80%. Therefore, the results didn't meet the criteria for success. Results of the second test showed that 10 students completed the exam. This time, 90% of the students earned a score of 85%; therefore the assessment was successful.

Reflecting on the results of this assessment project, the author states:

*“During future assessments projects of this type, I intend to set my criteria for success as a class cumulative score, rather than ‘a certain percentage of students are expected to score above 85%’. When a class consists of ten students or less, data can be heavily altered by only a few students, and isn’t the most efficient method of monitoring the class as a whole.”*

## Review of 2022-2023 Co-Curricular Plans

### Math and Science Club

Math and Science Club members are expected to demonstrate the knowledge they have gained as a result of participating in educational opportunities provided through the club. Students participating in an educational activity (zoo, aquarium, museum, etc.) on the end-of-the-year trip were to focus on one aspect of the venture that they found most interesting. At a later time, club members were to orally communicate with the rest of the group what they learned. Club advisors used a rubric to judge the quality of their presentations based on communication skills and scientific knowledge. To be successful, students would need to receive a minimum of 85% of the points available from the rubric.

Results indicated that seven students went on the end-of-the-year trip which included a trip the Nashville Zoo. The students were awarded points based on how well they were able to describe their favorite animal to the rest of the club, the accuracy of the information that they learned about their chosen animal, and the correct use of proper language. Six of the seven students (85%) received all the available points. Most of the students seemed to thoroughly enjoy describing their favorite animal to the rest of the group. The club sponsor states, *“We will continue to have this type of discussion on the end-of-the year trips to make the zoo/museum trips more meaningful and productive for the students.”*

### Softball

Softball students are expected to learn leadership and team building skills, while also learning mental processes that will enable them to perform and communicate effectively. Softball students were to read an excerpt from Championship Teambuilding and write a summary, reflecting on the material and how they will apply the philosophies to the team environment, including communication skills. To be successful, 100% of students would need to score 80% or higher on the writing assignment. Additionally, softball students were to attend a mental skills seminar and then write a short essay about what they learned from the session and how they could apply it to their approach on the field. To be successful, 100% of students would need to score 80% or higher on the writing assignment.

Results of the first assessment project showed that 100% of the students scored 90% or higher on a completed summary on how to create and maintain a positive team environment, focusing on effective communication skills, including providing constructive feedback, team building exercises, and avoiding conflict. Results of the second assessment project showed that 100% of the softball players scored 95% or higher on a written essay, explaining some of the



skills that they acquired at the mental skills seminar, such as positive self-talk, goal setting, and relaxation techniques, which they applied to their softball season, resulting in a high, team batting average of .368 and competitive fielding percentage of .927.

The softball coach plans on continuing to use leadership, team building, mental prep skills and exercises to promote a positive team atmosphere, while also creating and maintaining a positive mental perspective, resulting in improved performance.

### Athletic Operations

Athletic operations focused their assessment efforts on the newly renovated fitness center. After renovation, enrollment in Fitness Center courses were expected to increase through marketing and promotional efforts, thus increasing overall use of the space. Additionally, students were to be better equipped to develop and execute personal goals to better themselves. Enrollment in Fitness Center through Physical Education courses were to be monitored and compared to previous enrollment to gauge success of marketing and promotion following the renovation. Expected results for the spring 2023 semester was a 20% increase in PE courses offered through the fitness center in comparison to previous enrollments. Results show that student experience in the Harry C. Bramlet Fitness Center was increased through the 2022-2023 academic year. Implementation of new lab-tracking software allowed for students to better track their time spent in the fitness center and monitor the necessary requirements to meet grade benchmarks and stay on track in fitness center courses. Monthly schedules were created and followed for two-PE instructors/fitness center attendants to increase supervision and access for students. Each attendant worked 10 or more hours per week while maintaining part-time status to ensure that the space was used only by those enrolled in appropriate courses. Marketing was increased for the fitness center space including a new landing page on SIC's website with

updated information on new equipment and machines along with a developed mission statement and overview. Sam Swinford, Athletic Operations Coordinator, presented to the Golden Circle Senior Lunch Club (February 1st), Carmi Rotary Club (July 5th), hosted the Harrisburg Chamber Luncheon with help from marketing in the heritage room (January 26th), and spoke at the Carmi Kiwanis Club (November 3rd) to raise awareness of the renovated space. In Spring 2022, Physical Education courses (excluding team-specific courses) increased in enrollment by 75 students. Fall 2022 saw an increase to 121 students and Spring 2023 an increase to 134 students meeting and exceeding the goal of a 20% increase in enrollment.

## Review of 2022-2023 Non-Instructional Plans

### Marketing

Students are expected to improve the messaging and reach of marketing efforts for the College. To do this, the marketing department planned to ask students to review, compare, and critique recently used media images and videos in a focus group, in addition to discussion about media habits, aiding in the development of new marketing campaign ideas and things to highlight in media messaging. Marketing planned to solicit the participation of five to seven students. Additionally, the marketing department planned to conduct an online survey to question students about their media habits, aiding in the determination of future media buys. Success would be achieved with the participation of 30 to 50 students.

Results showed that not one, but two focus groups, were held with approximately 10 students in each. *MediaCross* facilitated and reported not only on media habits and comparative ads, but also on overall satisfaction with the College. Overall, the report shows that SIC has a high level of student satisfaction. The favored ad style was the “graffiti-style” ad images and real students used in advertising images. Students get their news from Apple News, Google, word of

mouth, social media including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn (occasionally), and YouTube. They do notice direct mail, billboards, and ads on the semi-trucks. They do not read newspapers, but some reported occasionally seeing ads in the Harrisburg Register, Herald Enterprise, SI Dollar Saver and Marion Star. Students watch network TV for sports, but report using YouTube, Twitch, Netflix, Paramount, Disney+, Hulu, HBO Max, and other streaming platforms. Students use their own playlists on YouTube, Apple, and Spotify, though reportedly get sick of their playlists and listen to local radio stations when they drive, including 101.5 CIL-FM, 99.9 WOOZ-FM, 102.3 WEBQ-FM and others as they flip through. They report liking 80's and 90's music, 90's country, old country and 90's rock. Students also reported liking meme-style images and images with animals.

Simple survey questions were added to the online application form recently. Reports received for 2022 through April 2023 regarding hearing about SIC indicated that out of 1,899 applications: 1,002 report hearing about SIC through their high schools; 889 report hearing about SIC from family and friends from word of mouth; 364 report seeing SIC on social media; 169 report seeing SIC mailings; 148 report seeing SIC on billboards; 99 report seeing SIC information in newspapers; and 88 report hearing SIC information on the radio. Respondents were not asked about TV/streaming, digital advertising or the website. Marketing has requested those be added to the application in the future. In open-ended responses, many students reported attending SIC to participate in a sport or team.

Based on the survey and focus group findings, it is imperative to continue providing flyers and marketing materials for recruitment for distribution into high schools, as well as instructor visits and Spotlight Days. More effort must be placed on social media efforts, and a mix of advertising and marketing messages must continue to be placed on various media

platforms to reach broad audiences that have an influence on potential students. Video is increasingly important to reach potential students, and Marketing will continue to find ways to incorporate video into the marketing objectives, specifically in regard to social media efforts. Using real SIC students with fresh “graffiti-style” graphics in marketing will continue to be an objective in advertising images and messages, as well as more meme-style social media posts. Activities, sports, and competitive teams will be actively promoted.

#### Workforce and Illinois Small Business Development Center

The Workforce and Illinois Small Business Development Center (WISBDC) planned to provide a centralized location for small business owners in SIC’s region to recruit and advertise open and available employment positions. By utilizing the College’s dedicated website for regional positions, the WISBDC wanted to increase awareness of employment opportunities for students and the community, and for more small businesses in the community to utilize this resource. In order to be successful, the WISBDC planned to encourage small business owners to share their available positions as they would on Indeed or in a classified ad. The WISBDC would then continue to ask businesses to share and reach out to small businesses they know are struggling to hire. By March 2023, the WISBDC reviewed page insights and analytics to determine the number of visits to the site. To be successful, the WISBDC would need to see a 10 % increase in site visits from the previous year.

Several businesses were contacted via email to inform the WISBDC of open positions through the monthly newsletter and on social media. WISBDC did not receive a single response from area businesses, despite the vacancies those businesses were advertising on their own social media pages. At the job fair and through one-on-one client sessions, WISBDC staff learned that clients are struggling to hire because applicants are not qualified to work in entry-level or base



positions. The WISBDC plans to survey clients and the greater business community in Saline County regarding core qualities they require for entry-based employees. In these discussions, WISBDC learned that the majority of their applicants do not have customer service, Microsoft Office, or phone/email skills. The WISBDC is interested in partnering with the Community Education department to offer certification or skills-based classes or workshops in these areas. The goal is to provide the business community and WISBDC clients with the opportunities to train their workforce through quick and affordable programs at Southeastern Illinois College.

## Future Steps

Southeastern Illinois College is committed to the continued development and improvement of our assessment program. For the upcoming 2023-2024 academic year, the Assessment Committee created unique assessment forms for instructional, non-instructional, and co-curricular programs. This provides each of our programs a means to more accurately reflect upon relevant goals and outcomes. In an effort to provide more efficient and accessible training on assessment, assessment training modules were added to the College's learning management system, Canvas. Within these modules, videos cover the assessment process and ideas for writing assessment plans. Finally, plans for the 2023-2024 academic year include increasing the involvement of adjuncts and dual credit instructors into the assessment process. Plans are for lead instructors to send their assessment plans to the appropriate adjuncts and dual credit instructors for implementation.

## Closing Statements

Through our assessment process, SIC can evaluate the efficacy of its programs and ensure the needs of its students are being met. This report offers a small sample of the 2022-2023 assessment projects for SIC's instructional, non-instructional, and co-curricular areas.

In creating this report, it was of utmost importance to show both positives and negatives of assessment life at the College. Some projects proved to be successful while results were inconclusive for others. Regardless of the challenges presented, assessment at SIC remains a top priority for faculty, staff, administration and Board. We will continue to grow, educate, and prosper with our priority rooted in quality and improvement.