Assurance Argument

Southeastern Illinois College - IL

Review date: 6/24/2024

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.

Argument

Following the full comprehensive re-accreditation visit in 2019, Southeastern Illinois College (SIC) underwent a complete redefinition of the institutional strategic plan and the planning process. As a crucial component of the development of a new strategic plan, the college engaged stakeholders to review and update the college's mission, vision, and values. Additionally, stakeholders found it necessary to add institutional priorities to our guiding statements.

The following updated mission statement resulted and was adopted by the Board of Trustees in December 2021: *Southeastern Illinois College promotes quality, accessible, and accountable learning that is responsive to student and community needs.*

The development of the updated mission, vision, values, and institutional priorities unfolded using a three-phase process covering a timeframe of seven months.

During the first phase of the process (*Beginning to Plan*), the president issued a campus-wide memo in May 2021 calling for a new planning process to begin immediately and finish no later than fall 2023. During the cabinet retreat in summer 2021, a new strategic planning committee (SPC) was formed and charged with developing a new strategic planning process along with a new mission statement. A three-person steering committee was also selected by the president to guide the new planning process.

As cataloged in the SPC timeline 2021-2023, the steering committee formed four working subcommittees: Subcommittee One - Reporting Process; Subcommittee Two - Survey/Needs/Assessment/Environmental Scanning; Subcommittee Three - Mission/Vision/Values; and Subcommittee Four - Institutional Priorities.

In the second phase (*Listening and Reporting*), SPC completed an environmental scan of campus, regional, and national trends. The college then engaged with the campus community by hosting four public sessions with the findings presented from the environmental scan. Participant feedback was solicited and encouraged at the hearings. Furthermore, a SWOT analysis was conducted at staff development day in October 2021.

The analysis was divided into four focus areas: a) SWOT A - Institutional Data/Enrollment Trends; b) SWOT B - Student Success; c) SWOT C - District/Workforce Development; and d) SWOT D - Finance and Budget.

Themes, patterns, and similarities were quantified by the steering committee. A full list of SWOT results was

presented to the strategic planning committee during the November meeting. Student government representatives also presented their own SWOT analysis , and their contributions were greatly considered and appreciated by the institution.

In phase three of the process (*Building the Mission*), Subcommittee Three met on October 15 to review results from the SWOT analysis, values survey, institutional priorities survey, and other feedback from the campus (other feedback also included vision and values). Revisions and drafts of proposed mission statements were compiled and edited by subcommittee members and then shared amongst others. The subcommittee presented two mission statements to the full campus in survey form. The survey was designed to obtain feedback on the proposed statements and provide additional suggestions.

Based on results from the survey, a mission statement was slightly edited by the steering committee and voted for presentation to the full strategic planning committee. During the November 15, 2021 meeting, the strategic planning committee confirmed the new statement captured the data analysis, the guiding direction, and inclusiveness needed for the future mission of the college, and subsequently voted on a referral to the Board of Trustees for approval. On December 7, 2021, the SIC Board of Trustees approved the new mission statement.

Ensuring alliance with the college's mission statement, the newly adopted vision, values, and institutional priorities were also reevaluated in 2021. All statements have been posted on the college's website. The vision statement was updated to read: *Our vision is to provide excellent educational and service-focused leadership for our region to inspire personal growth, cultivate community connections, and prepare for a transforming 21st-century society.*

The values were redefined to capture the emphasis the college places on our commitment to those we serve and include: *Integrity, Student-focused, Inclusion, Compassion.*

Our institutional priorities have enumerated the priorities of the college's mission and our dedication to service. Collectively, these aspects demonstrate the college's commitment to its mission and guides the college's operations. The new institutional priorities encompass:

Teaching and Learning - We prioritize a commitment to life-long learning by providing quality learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom for students, faculty, staff, and community;

Service to the Community - We prioritize the needs of our community by actively collaborating with stakeholders to promote economic growth, workforce development, and community enrichment;

Accessibility - We prioritize availability to our stakeholders by creating an inclusive, equitable environment that fosters the educational and social well being of all;

Accountability - We prioritize sound stewardship by ensuring our actions faithfully serve the best interests of our students and community.

The college continues to serve as a regional hub for culture, arts, workforce training, and the outdoor enthusiast. Constituents served by the college include a wide range of students, whether from the traditional-age student entering upon high school graduation, the nontraditional student re-entering in hopes of training for advancement in the workforce, the high school dual credit or dual enrolled student hoping to get a jump-start on their academic career, or the community member interested in hobby and leisure-type classes, such as senior art. In fall 2022, the college expanded youth programming with the introduction of Studio 618 for contemporary and traditional dance class offerings for youth age Kindergarten to 12th grade. With the opening of the Ella Elizabeth Hise Museum of Regional Art in 2021, several local artists' work have been showcased and new special events established, such as the Jazz Under The Stars. Local and regional organizations utilize the college to host workshops and conferences, as well as annual fundraising activities. The college's Visual and Performing Arts Center hosts a number of performances each year. The Charles Hearn Outdoor Learning Complex offers space for workforce skills training to regional and state archery competitions. A new disc golf course on SIC's grounds has also opened for students, staff, faculty, and community members to utilize year-round.

SIC academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with our stated mission. As noted in the curriculum guides, we offer diverse academic and career and technical education programs that lead to

associate degrees, technical certificates, or certificates of proficiency. Currently, Southeastern offers approximately 40 degree and certificate programs. Many programs and certificates serve transfer students planning to matriculate to other colleges and universities while others assist students entering or transitioning into the workforce. In addition to traditional academic curricular, the colleges offers non-credit-bearing professional training opportunities for individual workers and area employers through the Workforce Education department. Similarly, SIC offers community education programs to local communities, which includes programming for both adults and children. For example, over the last few years, CTE career camps have been offered during the summer months to provide career exploration opportunities in welding, diesel mechanics, and health occupations in 2024, for elementary and middle-school age students.

Academic programs meet standards for the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), the state's governing agency for community colleges. Southeastern offers academic programming at various times of day, in different modalities, and on different schedules in order to maintain accessibility and affordability. This information information is shared with students through the printed schedule, college catalog, mailings, email, college website, and other publications throughout campus.

In 2021, Institutional Research created a daily enrollment dashboard to help the college monitor and share internal enrollment information across campus. This dashboard has bolstered the college's understanding of enrollment, institutional needs, and the demographic trends. Each year, the Institutional Effectiveness office updates a Quick Data report that is shared with cabinet and posted on the college's website. Student enrollment demographics have been slightly more diverse than that of the district we serve. In fall 2023, the student body enrollment was 92% white, 5% black or African American, and 2.5% Hispanic. In comparison, the demographics for the college district served is 94%, 2.5%, and 2%, respectively. Since 2020, the college has closely monitored changing demographics and population loss that began at the turn of the century. In fall 2023, the college set forth the goal of completing a new strategic enrollment management (SEM) plan to help the college track and monitor key performance indicators for increasing enrollment. The new SEM plan was presented and approved by the Board of Trustees at the May 21, 2024 meeting.

Each year with the help of institutional research, the college administers a student satisfaction survey to better understand the needs of students. In response to student feedback during the pandemic, the college hired a student mental health counselor. The counseling service is located adjacent to the student center, a common area, to remain visible while maintaining student privacy. In addition to individualized counseling services, the mental health counselor has provided training to faculty and staff at professional development days, organized a teen mental health conference in collaboration with the regional health department, and outlined a peer support program, as part of Illinois's recent legislation related to Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act.

In addition to mental health resources, there are several other student services available at SIC. Students are empowered to achieve their educational goals with support from academic advising, tutoring and TRIO. The offices of financial aid, veteran services, enrollment services, and disability services are available to help students. Additionally, since the last full visit in 2019, SIC has received the Upward Bound grant (for high school students), added a student success coach (through Title III), renovated the library (now called the Learning Commons) to house professional tutors, and overhauled the online learning management system by purchasing Canvas in 2021. These updates reflect our commitment to our new mission, vision, and values statements that will guide college operation's for our five-year planning cycle. Specifically, they address the institutional priorities of t*eaching and learning, accessibility, and accountability.*

The college's mission is articulated publicly in several locations and methods. Physical locations across campus include the lobby of A-B building, the lobby of the visual and performing arts center, the lobby of the Robert I Gregg technology center, the heritage room, the David L. Stanley white county center, and the board room in the Harry W. Abell administration building (campus map). Furthermore, the college articulates the mission through several publications, such as the college catalog, website, Facebook page, faculty handbook and the Viewbook. On an individual level, many faculty and staff include the mission statement as part of their email signature, as well as on the back of faculty/staff business cards. The college's mission statement and institutional priorities are discussed in leadership team meetings, board of trustees meetings, and other college events, including foundation meetings and advisory council meetings.

Sources

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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.

Argument

Since its founding in 1960, Southeastern has been dedicated to the local community it serves. Because the college is publicly and locally funded while overseen by a publicly elected Board of Trustees, the institution recognizes the close bonds with constituents and residents of the district. As such, Southeastern is committed to serving its district through a variety of educational endeavors and services.

Southeastern Illinois College is proactive in addressing the needs of students and the communities it serves. As a community college, SIC seeks to engage with its local district by providing unique services to the region. This has been demonstrated through academic partnerships, workforce and training partnerships, and community service aspects. The Early College Program (ECP) and dual credit programs address the needs of high school students in the district and help to offset some of the costs associated with higher education. To serve outgoing transfer students, SIC has continued to establish articulation agreements with college and university partners. In fact, in spring 2024, SIC and Murray State University (KY) forged a partnership to articulate agriculture transfer programs, specifically for ag business, ag education, and ag science. Community education serves students and citizens seeking non-traditional educational enrichment opportunities. Bright Beginnings Daycare at the Mary Jo Oldham Center for Child Study, a private enterprise on SIC's campus, provides childcare services for students, staff, and community members. Several academic programs, including SIC's nursing program, diesel technology and powersports programs have forged partnerships with area service providers. The annual Heritage Festival hosted on-campus brings area artisans and customers together in a highly popular, regional event. The Cosmetology Clinic provides hair and salon services for the public while providing valuable experience for students. SIC's Workforce and Small Business Development Center offers workforce development training to meet economic development needs of the region.

Additionally, the college has remained committed to accountability and public transparency. On its website, the college devotes an entire section to Accountability. Under this link, which is available as a footer on every webpage, the college publicly provides information regarding its assessment practices, strategic planning, data dashboards, and KPI's. Southeastern also publicly discloses its financial standing by posting budgets and annual audits on its website. Collectively, the aim of the webpages is to publicly showcase the college's stewardship for the district through public accountability and transparency.

As a public unit of local government, SIC's primary mission is to provide open access education. This is reflected in the college's strategic plan, with the first major initiative emphasizing the advancement of *student success*. Likewise, the first of four institutional priorities pertains directly and specifically with *Teaching and Learning*. By placing these educational initiatives first in the respective documents, the college stresses its commitment to the primacy of its educational mission. In addition, initiative four of the strategic plan focuses on community and economic development.

Furthermore, SIC undergoes annual audits as a unit of local government, and therefore is not subjected to the generation of financial returns to investors like for-profit institutions. Similarly, the Southeastern Illinois College Foundation (SICF) is a non-profit organization that raises and administers private funds to support activities and programs at the college, which supplement capital received through local, state, and federal tax resources and student tuition. Additionally, the SICF secures funding to increase student access to the institution. As a component unit of the college, the SICF is under the same auspices and not beholden to external investors. With a Board composed of

community supporters, business owners, alumni, and benefactors, the Foundation demonstrates its commitment to the college and community.

Since the college is not obligated to external investors, SIC is able to offer many educational services for little to no cost. For example, students participating in the Early College Program and other dual credit options have tuition waived. Additionally, students participating in programs such as the certified nurse assisting (CNA) program also have tuition waived. For healthcare programs, the college works closely with local and regional healthcare providers to provide training and promote employment opportunities. Some healthcare providers offer financial assistance for student educational expenses. Through the state's Career Agreement, students can enroll in academic programs not available in their home district at in-district tuition rates. Furthermore, the college utilizes advisory boards for CTE programs to ensure academic programs are closely aligned with local industry. In 2022, campus administrators and business and industry leaders from White County met to discuss programming needs for the new vocational center to be located in Carmi. From these advisory meetings, the Industrial Maintenance program was created, offering coursework specific to the needs of the region, including welding, diesel technology, truck driving, and programmable logic controllers (PLC).

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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.

Argument

SIC offers co-curricular programs suited to the institution's mission which contribute to students' educational experience. Co-curricular opportunities complement several programs, such as the national and state award-winning speech and debate team for English and communication majors, the archery or shooting team for outdoor recreation enthusiasts, and state award-winning Model Illinois Government for government and political science students. These teams, while not limited to the majors noted above, provide opportunities for students to apply classroom lessons in a competitive environment. Other examples of co-curricular activities include SIC clubs and organizations, athletic and competitive teams, and the TRIO/SSS program. SIC includes co-curricular organizations in its peer review schedule which is noted in Criterion 4B.

SIC fosters a culture of diversity through the institution's mission, vision, and identified values. For example, the institution's vision statement emphasizes a "*service-focused leadership ...to inspire personal growth, cultivate community connections, and prepare for a transforming 21st century society."* Additionally, the college's core values reflect commitment to *integrity, inclusion* and *passion.*

SIC is committed to teaching students to successfully live and work in a culturally diverse, global society. A number of the college's initiatives and processes support this goal. For example, diversity is directly addressed in the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan initiatives 3.3 and 3.4. Moreover, SIC's diversity committee provides guidance to foster a welcoming and inclusive climate that demonstrates respect for diverse cultures, backgrounds, and ideas.

The diversity committee implements ongoing training opportunities. Each fall, beginning in 2022, the Executive Dean of Student Services broadcasts an email to all students highlighting Canvas and MySIC profile features with the capability to update campus name, preferred pronouns, and primary language. In fall 2022, the Senior Director of Human Resources sent an informational email to all employees about respecting gender pronouns. Some faculty and staff have chosen to include their pronouns in their email signature line. Appropriate pronoun usage was reinforced in a fall 2023 DEI initiative mandating employees to complete an annual online diversity training module.

Pursuant to Public Act 102-1046, Illinois higher education institutions were tasked with developing an equity plan to be submitted to the Illinois Community College Board by May 31, 2024. In response, the Executive Dean of Institutional Effectiveness convened a student equity gaps taskforce in November 2023 to demonstrate an institutional commitment to equitable student success. More specifically, the mission of the taskforce (Pg. 8) is to ensure equitable student success outcomes for all students and to ensure policies, procedures, and practices are in place to advance the achievement of all students, emphasizing the reduction of success gaps for traditionally underrepresented students.

SIC's divisional assessment plans feature social and cultural awareness as a general education target area/performance indicator. Classes offer a wide range of assignments to enrich students through multicultural experiences. For example, the nursing program promotes cultural awareness by hosting a Culture Day where nursing students showcase presentations covering multicultural topics. Academic courses have been created to teach students how culture and social contexts influence communication and behaviors.

SIC's employment or contractual activities reflect attention to human diversity. SIC has an exemplary record of minority service providers. Additionally, college employment opportunities are advertised in minority publications,

such as [Higher Ed Jobs]. SIC was the only community college in the state's southern region to have its first female president, and the current president's cabinet is primarily composed of female members. Furthermore, SIC has named its second female president to begin July 1, 2024. SIC does not discriminate based on gender, race, disability, orientation, or other commonly noted inclusion traits.

Although a formal institutional commitment to support and increase diversity exists, the extent of racial diversity attained in our students, faculty, and staff remains limited. The [demographics] of SIC students are primarily Caucasian and middle-to-lower socioeconomic class. To facilitate a diverse experience, the institution empowers students to recognize global diversity through educational support programs and student services such as TRIO/SSS, Upward Bound, and Perkins. [TRIO/SSS] works to increase retention and graduation rates of first-generation, low-income, or disabled students. Similarly, Upward Bound focuses on persistence and completion for eligible high school students. In recent years, SIC has assisted high school students with individualized education plans (IEP) with remedial coursework, such as developmental English and math, through a statewide Bridge Grant. [Dana Keating Student Success Center] and [OLET] offer educational support services to all SIC students. [The David L. Stanley White County Center] in Carmi hosts the [Illinois Worknet Center,] which provides services through the Illinois Department of Employment Security and Southern 14 Workforce Investment Board.

Southeastern provides a plethora of cultural enrichment opportunities for the campus and surrounding communities. The [George T. Dennis Visual and Performing Arts Center] is a beacon of cultural diversity for the campus and region, by allowing the college to host an extensive array of cultural programming. SIC's [theatre department] produces two full-length plays and two full-length musicals each academic year. Moreover, Jr. Falcons hosts two children's shows every summer. Local high schools also utilize SIC's theatre as a venue for their own productions. The theatre department annually hosts Drama Con, a regional day-long event for high school-age students, providing a variety of related hands-on workshops. The [Community and Concert Choirs] typically perform three times throughout the year. A children's choir was added in 2023, accepting children from third through eighth grade, holding one to two performances each year. The [Cultural Arts Series] has been in operation for almost four decades bringing a variety of cultural experiences to the SIC campus. These musical performances are open to the general public. Additionally, the [Ella Elizabeth Hise Museum of Regional Art] fosters an appreciation for visual artwork, exhibits, programs, and cultural partnerships that celebrate Southern Illinois and the surrounding region.

Our [Disability Services] office provides educational support services for qualifying students under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Through this office, students with learning, psychological, or physical disabilities are provided accommodations such as note-taking, extended testing time, sign language interpreters, and other modifications based on documentation. In July 2022, SIC added a [mental health counselor] as part of its sharing alliance with Rend Lake College. In addition to individual and group therapy sessions, the counselor has held student wellness and mental health educational presentations across campus.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

In summary, the mission of Southeastern Illinois College governs the operation of the institution and is intentionally included in its assessment, budgeting, and strategic planning processes. It drives the academic offerings of the college and provides a foundation for the services the institution provides to its district. SIC has a multifaceted mission and serves a broad constituency group. As such, the institution is committed to serving students through our educational mission, as well as the public good, through numerous collaborations with the local communities served.

Sources

There are no sources.

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.

Argument

SIC is governed by a Board of Trustees responsible for creating, adopting and enforcing policies of the Illinois Public Community College Act (110 ILCS 805) and federal laws to warrant integrity in all operations of the college. The board, administration, faculty, and staff have created, through policies and processes, a fair and ethical working and learning environment. Since the last comprehensive visit in 2019, the institution has developed and the Board has adopted multiple policies to promote the mission and adhere to legislation:

- **BP 9025.1 Financial Hardship and Physical Hardship Withdrawal Process** (July 2022): Consistent with the Illinois Debt Assistance Act, this policy assists students with limited student debt or financial hardship when withdrawing from the College.
- **BP 9026 Honorary and Posthumous Degrees** (July 2022): This policy articulates the eligibility requirements and process for granting these credentials.
- **BP 9001.2 Optional Standardized Testing for Admission** (January 2023): Consistent with the Higher Education Fair Admissions Act, this policy makes standardized testing optional for the applicant.
- **BP 9002.8 Residency for Active Duty Education Beneficiaries** (January 2023): Consistent with the Higher Education Veteran Grant Program, any person entitled to assistance as described in 38 U.S.C 3679(c), shall be deemed an in-district resident for tuition purposes.
- **BP 6027 Animals on Campus** (April 2023): Consistent with state and federal laws, this establishes a policy outlining circumstances permitting animals on campus.
- **BP 9027 Financial Holds** (September 2023): In accordance with the Illinois Student Debt Assistant Act, the College will not withhold an official transcript due to a debt to the institution.

The institution ensures financial integrity through detailed budgeting and auditing processes. Budgeting begins with the Vice President of Administrative Services and the Board of Trustees. From there, budget forms are distributed to each Executive Dean and Vice President for distribution to budget officers. The budget officers review needs based on the objectives detailed in the institution's Strategic Plan and create a proposed budget for the following academic year. Budget officers are required to complete budget linkage forms with budget proposals linking requests to institutional goals, assessment, and strategic planning. Open budget hearings, facilitated by the Business Office and the Vice President of Administrative Services, are then conducted for each department across campus. Attendees at open budget hearings have an opportunity for dialogue. Once the individual departments have provided input for the budget, a tentative budget is presented to the Board of Trustees within a minimum of 30 days prior to potential adoption. The Board then has the option to adopt the budget after a public hearing at the regularly scheduled trustees meeting.

SIC works hard to ensure financial transparency in spending and educational costs. The college's tuition and fees are clearly presented in multiple campus publications and on SIC's website. The Financial Aid Office, in conjunction with the Vice President of Administrative Services, calculates cost of attendance annually in compliance with federal regulations according to institutional and program-specific costs. In addition, as mandated by Board policy, campus-wide audits are performed yearly by Kemper C.P.A. Many policies adopted by the institution promote transparency

and integrity, including Purchasing Guides, Investment of Funds, Capitalization, Disposal of Equipment, Fund Balance, Whistle Blower, Conflict of Interest, and adherence to the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

SIC continues to provide many assurances to students that guarantee integrity as they progress through their educational endeavors. Southeastern has a student conduct code, complies with the federally mandated Right to Know disclosures, and adheres to all policies expressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The college participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) and is a member of the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), and the Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs.

Student records are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which prohibits the college from sharing academic or personal information, with the exception of directory information, to any person without written consent. Per board policy, students are afforded, per FERPA, the right to request an amendment of their education records.

A commitment to integrity is present throughout the college's policies and processes concerning personnel. The Human Resources Hiring Manual details an objective approach to reviewing applicants and the institution's hiring policies from the creation of hiring committees, review of applications, interviews, and selecting a candidate for employment. Southeastern is an "equal opportunity employer" with a commitment to anti-discrimination in all levels of employment, work, and learning environments. In addition to mandated annual sexual harassment and ethics training, full-time employees are now required to complete yearly diversity training, which was implemented as part of the College's DEI program. Moreover, the College is an institutional member of the Illinois Community College Diversity Commission, which provides training opportunities for diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. Specific to safety awareness, the College maintains annual online training requirements for full-time employees. For fall 2023, trainings included ergonomics, safety awareness/attitudes, emergency preparedness, back-injury prevention, and workplace emergency planning. To combat cybersecurity threats, the Information Technology (IT) department assigns annual obligatory phishing training to all institutional employees. Further, IT conducts random e-mail phishing testing every month.

All employees, including faculty, staff, and administration, are evaluated on a bi-annual or three-year cycle through procedures outlined in the bargaining contract and the Board Policy Manual. The quality of academics is closely monitored at SIC through course evaluations by students and instructor evaluations, provided in the bargaining contract. Faculty self-assessment occurs annually. Faculty undergo student evaluation of courses each semester. The school ensures that all faculty have appropriate credentials, as set by the Higher Learning Commission, for all areas of instruction.

Participants in competitive clubs and athletic teams are held to the same level of conduct as regular students. Competitive club participants who travel for competitions and/or events are also required to read and sign an insurance agreement with the business office.

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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.

Argument

SIC works diligently to present itself to the public by using multiple outlets for information dissemination, with the primary source being the college website. Printed literature available for public distribution includes the catalog, course schedule, and Viewbook. SIC also has a social media presence by having public accounts with Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, and Instagram. In addition to existing social media platforms from the previous visit, Southeastern has developed a TikTok account to share SIC content.

While the College continues to utilize the webpage as the primary source of information dissemination, SIC launched a new website in July 2022 with a sleek, modernized appearance with user-friendly navigation. The SIC catalog has undergone an annual review with the online version edited when appropriate. Printed catalogs remain on a two-year rotation and have since been republished, encompassing the academic years 2021-2023 and 2023-2025, respectively. The College has continued to update and publicly distribute semesterly course schedules and the Viewbook. Furthermore, SIC has developed an annual publication titled "Falcon Focus" (formerly, *A Year in Review*), which is made available to students, faculty, staff, alumni, Board and community members.

Program offerings at Southeastern are clearly presented to students and the public via multiple sources. Southeastern grants seven associate degrees and a variety of occupational certificates. SIC divides programs into two areas: baccalaureate/transfer and career and technical education. Baccalaureate programs are divided into two divisions: Humanities, Fine Arts and Social Science; and Mathematics, Science and Technology. Career and technical education programs are divided into three divisions: Applied Technology; Nursing and Allied Health, and Workforce and Community Education. A listing of program offerings can be found on SIC's website, as well as in the catalog, in the course schedule, and Viewbook.

Program-specific curriculum guides are accessible both on SIC's website and in the college catalog. Curriculum guides list the following information: type of program (transfer or career and technical education), courses required to complete a respective degree or certificate, suggested terms in which to complete said courses, total credit hour requirements, minimum GPA requirements, career opportunities, and major employers.

SIC continues to have itemized five-step admissions process published in multiple outlets. This includes: (1) apply online; (2) provide proof of residency; (3) submit official copies of transcripts (high school, high school equivalency exam, college); (4) take a placement exam, if applicable; and (5) meet with an academic advisor. Admissions requirements can be found on the college's website, in the catalog (page 11), and in course schedules.

Contact information for faculty and staff at SIC is easily accessible on the college website. Contact information includes name, department, title, email address, phone extension, and office location. Faculty, staff, and students are also given the option to sign up for the txtSIC messaging service, which allows certain administrators to send text alerts about emergency situations, campus closures, and other academic information (i.e. last day to drop classes, Falconmail outages), registration opening, etc.

The annual cost of attendance is accessible on the college's website, as well as in the course schedules. The Financial Aid Office updates the cost of attendance annually for full-time, three-quarter-time, part-time, and less than part-time students. Cost of attendance includes direct fees, such as tuition and fees, books and supply costs, and indirect fees, like room and board, transportation, and personal costs provided by the U.S. Department of Education. The Financial

Aid Office includes cost of attendance on the student's *MySIC* portal and within their college financing plan. The award disclosure includes the student's financial funding eligibility. Another service provided by the Financial Aid Office is the net price calculator, which is designed to provide potential students an estimate of the amount of financial aid they could receive.

The Viewbook, which is used as a recruitment tool, lists in-district tuition rates, as well as border county tuition rates and rates for online students. Viewbooks are disseminated to high school students by the high school recruiter/dual credit coordinator. They are also provided to various in-district libraries and distributed at job fairs. Class schedules, which are printed at SIC, list in-district tuition rates, as well as out-of-district, border county, out-of-state, international, and distance learning rates. Schedules also list student activity fees, technology fees, and facilities fees. If a specific class has an attached course fee, this is also noted in the schedule.

Per Board Policy 2005, SIC is required at the end of each fiscal year to undergo an audit by a licensed auditing or accounting firm. The firm examines the institution per rules and regulations set forth by the Illinois Community College Board and the U.S. Department of Education. Electronic copies of annual audits are available to the public on the college's website. Per Board Policy 8001, the college President is responsible for preparing a budget each fiscal year for the institution, estimating revenues and expenditures. A public hearing is scheduled before the adoption of the budget by the Board of Trustees. The Board will then adopt the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, per Board Policy 8002.

Governed by ICCB, Southeastern is subject to periodic recognition visits. Following the five-year Recognition Visit in 2020, the ICCB awarded Southeastern with a Certificate of Recognition, reaffirming the institution as an officially recognized community college district. Moreover, the College has remained in good standing with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). After conducting a compliance survey visit in October 2023, the VA narrative report concluded SIC had a successful completion with no findings. In accordance with U.S. Department of Education Title IX regulations, the College has complied by posting annual employee trainings since 2020 on the website.

Accreditation relations are readily available for public view through multiple outlets. SIC is accredited through the Higher Learning Commission, which is published on the college's website, in the college catalog, and the Viewbook. Southeastern's most recent accreditation visit was held in April 2019 through Open Pathways. The HLC awarded Southeastern with the maximum accreditation period of 10 years with no focus visits or monitoring reports required. SIC is a member of the Illinois Community College System and is fully recognized by the Illinois Community College Board. The Associate Degree Nursing program was granted accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) in March 2022. The ACEN accreditation status is displayed on the college website and listed on the ACEN website. In June 2023, the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) reaffirmed that the Diesel Technology program continues to meet the requirements for Master Truck Service Technology, the highest level of ASE program accreditation. The ASE recertification status is highlighted on the college's website and listed on the ASE Education Foundation website.

SIC offers co-curricular programs suited to the institution's mission which contribute to students' educational experience. Co-curricular opportunities complement several programs, such as the national and state award-winning speech and debate team for English and communication majors, the archery or shooting team for outdoor recreation majors, sports teams and coaching classes for student basketball, baseball, or softball athletes interested in coaching, esports classes for IT majors, and state award-winning Model Illinois Government for government and political science students. These teams, while not limited to the majors noted above, provide opportunities for students to apply classroom lessons in a competitive environment.

SIC includes co-curricular organizations in its peer review schedule. Co-curricular programs that receive funding from SIC's Student Government Association must assess and go through the peer review process every other year.

Further, SIC provides numerous performance and exhibit opportunities to enhance students' educational experience. Art exhibits from regional artists are showcased regularly in the Ella Elizabeth Hise Museum of Regional Art, with student artwork displayed in the art gallery in F Building. Theatre students have opportunities to produce shows from building sets and designing lighting to choreographing dances or performing onstage. Other students have opportunities to exhibit at SIC's annual health fair and perform for peers by the community or student choirs.

Finally, SIC offers service-learning opportunities across a variety of programs to foster active student engagement. For

example, math and science students participated in the total solar eclipse observation event held in April 2024. Other students volunteer their time in SIC's student food pantry, stocked with resources donated by SIC clubs/programs and community contributors. Other examples, include:

- SIC's food pantry is now run through Student Government;
- Student Government has conducted clothing and shoe drives;
- Math and Science club provide oversight of recycling projects on-campus,
- Students in the ACE program volunteer service to a number of organizations, and
- SIC's nursing program fundraises for the American Heart Association and other local charities.

From competitive and performance opportunities to hands-on and service learning events, SIC's co-curricular offerings enable students to advance their education in a meaningful way.

SIC's mission statement indicates that "*Southeastern Illinois College promotes quality, accessible, and accountable learning that is responsive to student and community needs."* In addition to strong academic programs already mentioned in a previous section, the College meets community needs through the Workforce and Illinois Small Business Development Center (WISBDC), cultural arts series, senior arts classes, community education classes, theatre performances for local students, an annual job fair and community health fair. These events engage the community in various ways that fuel learning, enhance exposure to a diverse business community, improve access to the performing arts, and increase opportunities for scholarship and creativity.

Finally, SIC pursues its mission of supporting economic development by hosting local business owners and vendors at the Heritage Festival, referenced in 1B, which welcomes more than 1,000 people to campus each year. Through this event, which remains one of the larger craft shows in southern Illinois, SIC promotes local and regional small businesses by providing a centrally-located host site, supporting businesses, and promoting community engagement. Additionally, SIC works with local youth entrepreneurs through the Saline County CEO group by hosting their annual event on-campus. Locally, SIC works with businesses to anticipate employers' needs and train staff accordingly.

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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.

Argument

The Board of Trustees is the official governing board of SIC and consists of seven trustees elected at-large from District #533, with staggered six-year terms. One student trustee, who has an advisory vote, is elected by the student body and serves a one-year term. Section II of the Board Policy Manual Series 2000 contains policies that summarize membership, meetings, methods, and duties of trustees. As part of the on-boarding process, new board members receive an orientation packet and meet with board leadership and the president to review policies, meeting agendas, Illinois open meetings act, college financial statements, and other related material. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month, except June and November. Board policy undergoes regular review and is updated as needed.

The governing Board deliberates to preserve and enhance the institution through the framing of Board goals, defining clear policies and fiduciary responsibilities. For example, the Board approves the annual budget as noted in the September 2023 Board minutes and the annual audit that was conducted and reported to the Board at the December meeting as cited in the 2023 December Board minutes. Since the last HLC visit in 2019, the Board of Trustees has expanded its partnership with Rend Lake College (RLC) to enhance organizational capabilities and advance student success. In 2021, the Board signed an official Alliance Agreement with RLC, which authorizes collaboration and resources to combat instructional and enrollment challenges facing both institutions. Furthermore, the Boards of Trustees hold joint biannual meetings to review program and service collaborations. For example, to address mounting student mental health concerns, the Board approved to share a Mental Health Counselor position in 2022. The two colleges continually share academic resources, including courses and personnel. Both institutions have earned accolades for their continued partnership. SIC Vice President Dr. Karen Weiss and RLC Vice President Lori Ragland co-presented a session titled *"Sharing Not Snaring"* about the Alliance Agreement at the 2022 Higher Learning Commission Annual Conference. Additionally, SIC and RLC were named co-recipients of the Innovation Award from the Illinois Council for Community College Administrators in 2022 for the Alliance Agreement.

SIC has also collaborated with neighboring John A. Logan College (JALC) to expand program offerings. In 2022, JALC and SIC partnered under an Emergency Medical Services grant to administer the emergency medical technician (EMT) training course. Most recently, SIC and JALC developed a joint agreement for the truck driving program. These CDL courses are taught on JALC's campus with an SIC instructor, and the courses are subsequently transcribed on the student's SIC transcript.

SIC's Board reviews and considers reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations as reported in board agendas and minutes. The Board fulfills its responsibilities through an organized committee structure through which the institution is governed such as the leadership committee, which is comprised of division chairpersons, department heads, and members of the administrative Cabinet. Academic Leadership Group meets once a month and minutes of these meetings can be found on Intrinsic, an internal document management system. The administrative cabinet meets once a week and each cabinet member submits a monthly report to the Board of Trustees through the Board packet to keep the Board

informed about departmental, divisional, and overall college issues. There are [five academic divisions](#) which ensure faculty oversight of the college's academic programs. Faculty have the responsibility for developing, implementing, and revising curricula and educational policies, determining credits for courses, deciding requirements for graduation, and electing members to campus committees. From faculty, new and revised curricula is then reviewed by academic services and the curriculum committee, who then recommends approval by the Board of Trustees.

In 2021, the Board approved amendments to [Board Policy 3001](#), which updated the [institutional organizational chart](#) and added a cabinet-level Executive Dean of Institutional Effectiveness to improve overall institutional efficiency efforts. The mission of the division of institutional effectiveness is to integrate the college's mission, vision, and values, institutional research (including Information Technology), assessment, planning, and budget to increase organizational efficiency. This practice is designed to serve the college's stakeholders and improve student success. Details of the work delivered from this position can be found through Criterion 5.

Administration and Board of Trustees interact with key external constituents of the district such as legislators, alumni, donors, local business leaders, and other professional organizations to build relationships to benefit the college and the community. The college works closely with the SIC Foundation to raise money for scholarships for students attending the institution, as well as to fund improvement and development projects on campus. Board policies, such as the citizens advisory committee, is an especially useful resource that utilizes community members' skills and experience to enhance the vocational curricula. Also referred to as the CTE advisory board, the group meets bi-annually as a means to network with professionals in the community and ensure programs are properly training students to enter the workforce. In 2023, the state of Illinois enacted [Public Act 102-1088](#) which requires all units of local government to levy a tax to convene a decennial committee on local government efficiency to *"study local efficiencies and report recommendations regarding efficiencies and increased accountability"* to the board of the county in which the unit of local government is located. This definition includes community colleges. The college will convene a decennial committee in the fall of 2024 in compliance with state legislation.

The SIC Board preserves its independence from undue influence guided by policies outlined in the Board policy manual. The Board operates as a cohesive unit and all decisions made by the trustees are geared to promote, deliberate, and act upon decisions that are in the best interests of the institution, students, and constituents. Board policies, [Code of Ethics](#), and Model Ethics Ordinance provide guidance for Board members' ethical conduct, political activities, and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by trustees. Board members must also complete a statement of [economic interests form](#) each year to report financial disclosures, per state statute. Another indicator that provides a strong record of independence is that the Board of Trustees commissions an external auditing firm to conduct the annual audit to provide to constituents of the college district and to ensure that the college accounting records are fair, complete, and adhere with the generally accepted accounting principles ([BP 2005](#)).

SIC's Board of Trustees has continued to govern autonomously while remaining committed to serving the students and constituents of the college district. To demonstrate the importance of governance, a [third-party consultant](#) (a former Illinois Community College Trustees Association executive director) was selected in 2023 to review and discuss Board governance policies, specifically Board Policy 2006: Duties of Individual Board Members and Board Policy 2007: Duties of the Board of Trustees. Furthermore, the most recent [Board Retreat](#) was held in March 2024 with topics covering effective governance, governmental shifts in higher education, national statistics, and self-assessments. Also, in fall 2024, Jim Reed, from the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA), is scheduled to provide training for the Board and new president on *Board-CEO relations*.

Following [Public Act 99-692](#), trustees have remained compliant with assigned leadership training, with training completion posted to SIC's website. Southeastern was the host site for the Southeast Region Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) meeting on November 7, 2023. Moreover, SIC trustee Dr. Frank Barbre serves as regional chair for ICCTA's Southeast Region. Dr. Barbre and trustee Jim Ellis consistently attend quarterly ICCTA meetings, most recently on June 7-8, 2024, in Lombard, Illinois, and subsequently report back to the Board. Furthermore, trustees and college administrators have remained active with the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). In February 2024, Dr. Barbre, trustee Jim Ellis, President Dr. Jonah Rice, and President-elect Dr. Karen Weiss, attended the ACCT National Legislative Summit in Washington, D.C.

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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.

Argument

SIC is committed to freedom of expression. Academic freedom is encouraged through Board policy, the faculty and staff handbook, and the faculty association (SICEA) contract. As described in the SICEA contract, faculty *are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing the faculty member's subject*. Faculty are granted freedom in research and in publication of results, as long as duties are performed adequately. Instructor duties, outlined in the SICEA contract, reference that faculty are to present subject matters in an unbiased and objective manner to stimulate critical thinking. Instructors have academic freedom to teach course objectives using the instructor's chosen teaching methods, but must cover content as defined by the master course syllabus.

In January 2024, Honorlock software was acquired by Online Learning and Educational Technology (OLET) to proctor online math course exams (replacing SmarterProctoring) due to its ease of use in courses while covering a wide range of online exam options. Honorlock's online proctoring service combined AI detection and live proctoring for test integrity while fully integrating with the institution's LMS, Canvas.

The diversity committee serves as an institutional pillar for freedom of expression. Each month the committee works with Learning Commons to display a group of books highlighting a specific culture or heritage. A broadcast email is sent from the Executive Dean of Student Services to spotlight each monthly collection. The nursing club also promotes cultural awareness by hosting a Culture Day each spring in the student center. Knowledge of cultural diversity and sensitivity to every patient's belief is part of patient-centered care. The Culture Day project is one tool used by nursing students and faculty to research client-centered care, and it is used to raise awareness to students, staff, and faculty on campus. Moreover, in spring 2022, COM 145: Intercultural Communication was developed to teach students how culture influences the communication process. The course is offered on a rotational semester basis.

To address recent topics in higher education, SIC's OLET department began offering faculty workshops and training with artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT, in fall 2023 at faculty/staff development day. Since then additional workshops have been offered through OLET and Illinois Community Colleges Online (ILCCO) consortium to educate faculty on the pros and cons of AI in higher education, introduce apps and resources, as well as offer strategies and lesson ideas for utilizing AI in planning, research, and instruction. SIC has chosen not to adopt a formal policy on AI, but rather allow SIC faculty the autonomy and freedom to choose to allow the use of AI at acceptable levels within their classrooms. Abuse of AI use in the classroom is considered a standard of conduct issue and handled through the student affairs division.

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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.

Argument

Students of SIC adhere to the conduct policy. In order to provide a safe environment, Southeastern's standards of conduct explicitly states that activities which are contrary to the general interest of the college community or which threaten to disrupt the teaching and learning in which members of the college community are engaged. Students enrolling in the college are expected to conduct themselves in a manner compatible to the college's function as an educational institution. Misconduct for which students are subject to discipline include, but are not limited to, academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and willful falsification of educational data represented as scholarly research. Furnishing false information to SIC with the intent to deceive, including but not limited to, incidents of embezzlement and fraud are also addressed.

SIC students, both online and traditional, are provided electronic information, resources, and other computer-based resources to support the college's educational mission. Students, faculty, staff, and others who use the college's computer-based resources are required to adhere to an acceptable use policy. This policy applies to all computer hardware and software owned or operated by the college, college electronic mail, the college website, and college online services and bulletin board systems. "Use" of the college network shall include use of or obtaining access to the wired or wireless network from any electronic device whether or not owned or operated by the college.

The college provides guidance for students in the area of ethical research and use of information resources with the offering of two online courses directed at informational literacy and research training for new students. These include EDUC 120 - Online Technology and EDUC 122 - Strategies for College Success. EDUC 120 focuses on developing students' basic skills and use of the college's online learning management system, as well as teaching them how to utilize the library's electronic research tools and resources. EDUC 122 is designed more to improve one's personal/social, academic, and career survival skills, such as goal setting, self awareness, learning modes, and it also touches on library learning resources. Both of these courses are also offered to high school students through dual credit/dual enrollment.

SIC continues to encourage academic honesty and research integrity. In 2020, SIC upgraded to a new learning management system by acquiring Canvas. This has been beneficial due to the ability to synchronize shared courses with Rend Lake College as they already utilize Canvas. With the Title III federal grant, the College was able to purchase Turnitin software in spring 2023. Turnitin promotes academic integrity by monitoring submissions for plagiarism and use of artificial intelligence. Furthermore, Learning Commons staff work diligently to provide semesterly professional development workshops for Canvas, Turnitin, and other online learning and educational content. For the 2023-2024 academic year, Learning Commons and the Online Learning and Educational Technology (OLET) department presented to faculty and staff at all three in-service training seminars, which are mandatory in-person events for full-time employees. In August 2023, Canvas online gradebook and Starfish training sessions were provided by OLET and IT staff, respectively. At the January 2024 in-service, an OLET representative outlined new features in Canvas, including testing accommodations for ADA students and system features for more effective online and hybrid instruction. In March 2024, the Executive Director of Learning Commons presented material to teach faculty and staff how to work more efficiently in Microsoft Outlook. Additionally, the institution utilizes its membership with the Illinois Community College Diversity Commission (ICCDC) to participate in free professional development opportunities. Most recently, administrators and faculty were encouraged to register for ICCDC's

upcoming "Equitable Decision Making: Tools and Resources" online training in April.

Since the HLC comprehensive review in 2019, the SIC Board of Trustees adopted Board Policy 6018.1: Institutional Research and Effectiveness Policy on Research and Survey Use to provide a coordinated approach to surveying prospective students, current students, alumni, faculty, staff, employers, community members, and other stakeholders. Furthermore, as part of the organizational restructuring in 2021, the Office of Institutional Research was shifted under the Division of Institutional Effectiveness, with a mission devised to provide research, data, and analysis in support of institutional effectiveness and overall college mission. All requests for surveys/research, whether internal or external, must get Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to conducting research. The Executive Dean of Institutional Effectiveness serves as the chairperson for the IRB. Members of the IRB are appointed by the President with guidance from the President's Cabinet. The IRB must have five or more members of varying expertise and maintain a commitment to research integrity.

In fall 2022, the college procured Accudemia, an online program that tracks student attendance. This management system affords monitoring capabilities for in-person attendance when there is no assigned meeting time. For example, students enrolled in a fitness center PE course are graded on a scale based on the number of sessions attended for the duration of one semester. Accudemia tracks attendance history by session that can be reviewed by both the student and the instructor of record. Additionally, Accudemia is utilized by the Title III Student Success Coach to monitor weekly study hall attendance mandated for competitive team participants.

Since the last HLC visit, the college has implemented significant technological safeguards. In 2022, a multi-factor authentication system for SIC faculty and staff was launched to enhance cybersecurity protection in the Falcon Portal. The two-factor authentication system was subsequently authorized for students in July 2023.

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2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

Southeastern Illinois College has continued to promote integrity while operating in an ethical and responsible manner. Board policies and clearly-defined departmental processes serve as tools to safeguard on multiple levels. The college promotes accountability by remaining transparent with its presentation to students and the public. Moreover, SIC has maintained and earned valuable memberships across governmental agencies and accrediting bodies.

The institution has expanded its commitments to academic freedom and the freedom of expression with new facilities and program offerings. The diversity committee has served as a catalyst to strengthen institutional DEI efforts. Multiple software platforms have been acquired to improve the quality of instruction, protect against cybersecurity threats, and monitor for academic dishonesty.

Sources

There are no sources.

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).

Argument

SIC offers six associate degrees and 40 occupational certificates, including an Associate in Arts (AA), Associate in Science (AS), Associate in Applied Science (AAS), Associate in Liberal Studies (ALS), Associate in Fine Arts, specializing in acting theatre or music theater (AFA), and Associate in Engineering Science (AES).

SIC's instructional programs are administered through academic divisions. These divisions are representative of the academic structure generally found in institutions of higher learning. Divisions were reorganized in 2021, with the social sciences division being absorbed into the humanities division to form a new humanities, fine arts, and social science division. Each of the academic divisions is led administratively by a division chair who reports to the Executive Dean of Academic Services. For most divisions, the division chair holds tenured faculty status. SIC also employs an Associate Dean of Workforce and Community Education, who reports to the Vice President of Academic and Student Services, and who serves as chair of the workforce education division. Further, allied health division is led by the Associate Dean of Nursing and Allied Health.

The quality and currency of SIC's educational programs are guaranteed through a rigorous learning outcomes assessment program; a five-year program review process for all academic programs and non-academic support departments; and where appropriate, external review through the evaluation of specialized accrediting agencies. Several improvements have been made to the assessment process since the last HLC review, including curriculum mapping of general education goals and the introduction of dual credit fidelity reports. Both of these integrated processes ensure that students are learning the same content and receiving general education goals regardless of modality, location, or instructor.

Curriculum mapping plays a vital role in the assessment process by providing a structured framework for evaluating student learning outcomes and aligning them with instructional goals. By visually representing the curriculum, the college can easily identify areas where certain topics or skills are overemphasized (redundancies) or underemphasized (gaps) in both instruction and assessment. Curriculum mapping also provides evidence that all general education goals are being met. This mapping is publicized on the college website.

SIC articulates dual credit courses with all in-district high schools to ensure that courses achieve stated learning goals across the institution and across modalities. This means dual credit courses must meet the same requirements as traditional courses to ensure they will transfer and bear credit. Initially, every course is reviewed by high school faculty and staff and college faculty and staff to ensure course objectives are aligned between high school and college courses. Each course is then re-evaluated annually to ensure that course objectives continue to be met, and dual credit faculty must meet the same qualifications as faculty on campus. Dual credit fidelity reports were implemented in 2023 in compliance with the Dual Credit Quality Act, and as a measure to validate congruency and consistency between

courses taught at the high school locations with those being taught on SIC's campus and online. This reporting system is not evaluative of personnel, but rather a survey of the course itself to determine if textbooks, methods of grading, and content rigor remain the same as on-campus and online instruction. Fidelity reports are conducted on-site at each of the high schools by SIC faculty, allowing faculty to provide commentary, advice, and share classroom resources. These reports also provide connection between dual credit faculty and SIC faculty, creating a mentor relationship in sharing resources, advice and ideas.

Additionally, in 2021, the college's co-curricular assessment process became more defined to include more groups and academic support departments on campus, such as TRIO/Student Support Services, Title III, tutoring services, competitive teams, and clubs. A comprehensive list of co-curricular activities and support services was created. Co-curricular assessment has a separate assessment form, and all co-curricular activities and services develop and submit assessment plans biennially.

To progress academic excellence and learning goals, SIC implemented Turnitin, a plagiarism detection software, integrated into Canvas in January 2023. With Turnitin, faculty members can enable a plagiarism checker for specific assignments, instilling the importance of academic integrity and quality. Also, Turnitin's AI writing detection tool identifies when AI writing tools like ChatGPT have been used in student submissions. Both faculty and students can view similar scores and open reports from the LMS when work is submitted to Turnitin. Finally, the institution has purchased HonorLock for online testing specifically in mathematics in compliance with a mandate from the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI). Professional monitoring must be administered to transfer IAI-approved online mathematics courses. The institution plans to expand these efforts in the future.

As stated in Criterion 1 and 2, SIC has strengthened our course-sharing agreement with regional community colleges. In 2021, SIC entered a formal alliance agreement with Rend Lake College. In this agreement, courses and programs can be shared to pool resources and accessibility for students. For example, SIC and RLC share music instructors and students to provide a full sequence of music theory and aural skills courses. RLC also purchases seats in SIC's Spanish course due to not having a Spanish instructor on their campus. These agreements allow for more robust class sizes and more course offerings for our students. Course sharing between SIC and RLC also takes place in math, physics, history, education, and the medical assistant and veterinary assistant programs. Recently, agriculture transfer curricula in ag education, ag business, and ag science have been added to the offerings through the alliance. Likewise, in 2023, SIC and John A. Logan College (JALC) partnered to share EMT coursework based on the regional need for emergency care.

With regard to course rigor, each course offered must adhere to a master course outline, be approved by the curriculum committee, and be compliant with Illinois Community College Board standards. Master course outlines include a credit-hour audit of each expected in-class and out-of-class instructional hour. Regular program review ensures the consistency of individual course outlines with master course outlines, safeguarding reasonable benchmarks for the required level of performance by students across all courses and modalities. SIC's program review process is state-mandated and follows a template form provided by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). The program review template form, process and procedures is located in the ICCB program review manual. Program review involves faculty completing a set of questions designed to evaluate the enrollment, retention, completion, and successful learning outcomes of its courses. Each program must complete a program review once every five years as dictated to SIC by the ICCB. Representatives from the program under review present their program review to the curriculum committee for discussion and evaluation.

SIC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, and recognized and monitored by the Illinois Community College Board, Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulations, and the Illinois Department of Public Health, who all affirm the currency and rigor of campus programs. The college maintains compliance with all of these agencies.

SIC participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), which allows for the transfer of completed general education curriculum between participating institutions. IAI participation requires that learning goals and educational requirements for lower-division general education requirements have been met.

Further, SIC maintains articulation agreements with four-year universities to facilitate the transfer of its students to other institutions. Advisors attend articulation meetings throughout the year to ensure these articulation agreements are accurate and tenable. These university partnership agreements are also accessible to students and community on

the institution's website.

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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.

Argument

At SIC, general education is intended to be an integral part of the instructional program for all students who seek a two-year degree, regardless of their educational or career goals. The general education program at SIC is intended to provide students with common skills and competencies while allowing the pursuit of individual interests within prescribed academic areas and to motivate them to seek the highest possible degree of personal growth and development.

SIC's general education curriculum adheres to the Illinois General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) set forth by the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), ensuring that student expectations and program goals are appropriate for transfer to other participating institutions. IAI oversight is reinforced by the periodic review of general education goals by SIC faculty in each division, as well as regular program review of each academic program every five years. SIC's general education goals were last revised in 2015. Revisions to the institution's general education goals are on schedule for 2025, focusing specifically on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The process of adopting and revising general education goals will remain the same and go through the College's curriculum committee, comprised of faculty, administration, and staff, as well as aligning to the requirements of the IAI.

With the newly crafted strategic plan, a new mission statement and institutional priorities emerged in 2022. The institution continues to offer general education programs appropriate to its mission and degree levels. To enhance processes with articulation and uphold general education requirements, the institution created and hired a Senior Director of Curriculum position, which the Board of Trustees approved on May 16, 2023. This full-time position is focused on institutional and state curriculum changes and approvals, IAI reviews and approvals, course scheduling, and working with sister institutions on sharing agreements. The position reports to the Executive Dean of Academic Services.

SIC promotes the engagement of students in every degree program by articulating specific course and program objectives that reflect creativity and the development of skills appropriate to the course. For example, in fall 2023, the College began offering coursework on a regular basis for the AFA in Musical Theatre degree, including four ICCB-approved dance courses in modern, tap, jazz, and ballet. This was a degree the college attempted in the past, but have since hired a full-time employee who serves as a dance instructor for the re-vamp of the college-level dance coursework.

One of the ways in which SIC promotes student success is through a focus on broad life skills. This is accomplished with the development of a student skills development series of classes which were implemented in fall 2021. The classes are designed to support students who participate on the College's competitive teams who are either new to the school or have not managed to maintain a 3.25 cumulative GPA. Because these students balance an increased workload associated with inter-collegiate competition, making additional support and resources necessary for success

is pivotal. The content of the course helps students build skills to take more responsibility for their education. In addition to skill-building, students are expected to build stronger relationships with faculty through targeted assignments designed to open doors with their teachers they see more often than their coaches and sponsors. The course also has a graded attendance component for which students are expected to spend one hour per week in the Learning Commons working on their coursework in any of their classes. The Learning Commons additionally accommodates a Student Success Coach who conducts individualized and group sessions with students, assisting them in optimizing their academic performance, refining study techniques, and addressing any other challenges they encounter that could impact success and persistence.

Additionally, the college is focused on student equity as a measurement of student success. In fall 2023, the Strategic Planning Committee, the Division of Institutional Effectiveness, and the Office of Institutional Research created a student equity gap dashboard. The purpose of the dashboard is to provide visualization of data analysis that identifies noticeable data gaps in student success outcomes. This demonstrates an institutional commitment to securing academic equity for all students. In response to the new student equity gaps dashboard, in January 2024, the Executive Dean of Institutional Effectiveness formed a student equity gaps taskforce. This taskforce has been tasked to study, research, and become familiar with the data. Once members become acquainted with the new visual aspect of data science, it will be the purpose of the taskforce to develop recommendations for closing student equity gaps. This will be accomplished with a holistic approach including small steps designed to focus on two or three data gaps at a time. Progressive implementation of the taskforce will be necessary to continually engage the institution with equitable outcomes for students.

Other ways in which the college promotes students success is by addressing students' mental health needs and physical needs, such as with food and clothing insecurities. In July 2022, SIC added a mental health counselor on campus three days a week. This position splits services between SIC and Rend Lake College as part of our sharing alliance. This position provides individual and/or group therapy sessions utilizing psychoeducation and proper therapeutic techniques for students. In 2023, the counselor's days on campus were increased to four days a week due to high need. In addition to individual and group therapy, the counselor has held many student wellness and mental health education presentations, including a student wellness workshop (October 2022), a nursing conference presentation (March 2023), a presentation for the Upward Bound program (April 2023), was the keynote speaker at the college's back-to-school faculty and staff in-service (August 2023), and ran a teen mental health conference on campus for five area high schools as well as SIC's nursing program. Over 100 students were in attendance for the conference.

Human and cultural diversity are intertwined in several events and activities offered at SIC. The College hosts an annual Black History Month and Step Show as part of TRIO/Student Support Services programming. In 2024, the event added an entry on spoken word poetry. The SIC Cultural Arts Series continues to provide multicultural and diverse performance experiences for students and the community, offering new performances each semester. One highlight recently was the concert of Dr. Madeline Rogers, visiting assistant professor of piano at Berea College and SIC alum, and Dr. Sila Darvill, a Turkish violinist and Easter Kentucky University violin professor (November 2023). Their concert featured a curated selection of violin and piano compositions by Sergei Prokofiev, A. Adnan Saygun, and Karol Szymanowski. Another high point was classical guitarist Peter Fletcher, providing repertoire from the Baroque period through the 20th century (October 2023). The SIC Cultural Arts Series provides three concerts each semester. In addition to events and activities, human and cultural diversity is addressed in the curriculum.

Additional education in the performing arts at SIC has expanded its audience to the surrounding community. Studio 618, established in fall 2023, is a K-12 dance program for community students to take dance classes. Further, the college established the SIC Children's Choir in January 2023 for students in grades 3 - 8. These are just a few additional ways the college is providing the community and students with opportunities for growth and development in the performing and creative arts.

The Ella Elizabeth Hise Museum of Regional Art continues cultivating an appreciation of visual art collections, exhibitions, programs, and collaborations that showcase the essence of southern Illinois and its neighboring regions. The museum has several exhibits throughout the year and a recent exhibit in February 2024 for Black History Month.

SIC facilitates faculty and student contributions to global bodies of knowledge through experiential learning, student internships, competitive teams, and clubs. SIC's forensic team won the Phi Rho Pi national community college speech and debate tournament in 2021. Students also have opportunities to participate in Model Illinois Government, which facilitates their research of the current local, state, and national political landscape. Students may also participate in

student work opportunities or serve as student government representatives on major faculty committees, such as assessment, curriculum, and strategic planning.

Faculty enjoy specific avenues to advance their scholarship or creative work. Since the college's 2019 review, faculty and staff have contributed to scholarship and creative work appropriate to their disciplines. Dr. Sonia Yewell, Title III Learning Enhancement Coordinator and adjunct psychology instructor, completed the Educational Leadership and Management certificate from Capella University (September 2020). Tiffany Brannock, Registrar, furthered her education and earned a Master's in Business Administration in 2023 from the University of Southern Indiana. Scott Reed, IT faculty, has received additional IT certifications. Dr. Kyla Burford, Executive Dean of Student Services, and Dr. Chris Barr, Executive Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, both received their Ed.D. doctoral degrees from the University of the Cumberland and Missouri Baptist University, respectively in 2023.

SIC's diesel technology instructors have persistently pursued advanced technical training to maintain their Automotive Service Excellent (ASE) certifications. Additionally, they have undergone specialized training programs offered by Kawasaki Dealer University and the University of Polaris.

Distance Learning Specialist Dr. Angie Mayfield added to her professional development by completing the University of Illinois Springfield course, "AI: Future of Learning" (September 2023). Dr. Mayfield then turned that knowledge into a workshop for SIC faculty titled, "The Good, The Bad, & The Bot Ugly: Teaching & Learning with AI" during the College's professional development day on October 6, 2023. Kim Martin, math faculty, spoke at the Illinois Council of Teachers of Mathematics (ICTM) Regional Conference (February 2020) and the Regional Office of Education Professional Development Conference on college readiness in mathematics (October 2021). These are just a few examples of faculty and staff's scholarly advancements and contributions.

During the pandemic, online and distance learning became crucial. Classrooms were modified, and faculty underwent continual training to enhance effective instructional delivery through different modalities. Live and recorded video meetings were the most apparent and readily available tools for adding a suitable supplemental source. For example, areas such as nursing held face-to-face courses while being live-streamed, recorded, and uploaded for viewing on the LMS, addressing both synchronous and asynchronous needs. While faculty pivoted between face-to-face, hybrid, and distance learning, Learning Commons staff monitored and reviewed courses focusing on those in transition while providing feedback to faculty and administration. During the pandemic, the Office of Educational Technology (OLET) redeveloped its student online orientation and grew student customer support to cover new technology and challenges for students by modifying orientations and other informative services. All these efforts increased quality and attention to detail in providing online and hybrid courses during COVID-19. As a byproduct of the pandemic, the College migrated from *eLearning* to Canvas with an increased focus on quality and educational technology. As part of the migration, each course was reviewed with lessons learned from the pandemic in mind, improving course delivery and design.

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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.

Argument

SIC's commitment to quality education begins with a commitment to recruit and retain a well-qualified faculty dedicated to the mission of the institution and to the students in its charge.

Currently, SIC employs 33 full-time faculty and between 20-40 adjunct instructors, depending on the semester and student need. Faculty continue to teach 15 hours each semester, having opportunities to teach more if they choose. SIC has a 1:18 full-time faculty to full-time equivalent student ratio according to most recent IPEDS data. Faculty representation is a key factor in major institutional committees, including curriculum and strategic planning committees. Further, the committee and process is faculty driven. Faculty may receive release time for responsibilities beyond teaching and committee obligations, including serving as division chair. Faculty may also serve as sponsors or co-sponsors to SIC clubs and organizations. All of these factors help ensure that faculty have a manageable load with the tools they need to teach successfully.

Faculty qualifications remain consistent with ICCB and HLC guidelines. All baccalaureate faculty (full-time, part-time, and dual credit faculty) hold a master's degree or higher with at least eighteen hours of specific instruction in their field. All CTE teaching faculty (full-time, part-time, and dual credit faculty) have an appropriate credential in the field and 2,000 hours of work (not teaching) experience in the field being taught. Faculty update credentials annually on their faculty self-assessment, which is submitted to their division chair and academic dean. Academic Services and HR review and monitor credentials to ensure that faculty have current official transcripts on file. Educational requirements and other qualifications are established in faculty job descriptions, provided to each applicant before an interview and kept on file in SIC's HR office. Also before an interview, applicants' educational qualifications are reviewed by a hiring committee comprised of faculty in areas specific to position openings.

Specific programs also maintain rigorous standards for CTE teaching faculty. For example, SIC's Diesel Technology program is certified by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE). As an ASE certified program, the Diesel Technology shop is reviewed every five years to ensure the quality and safety of the shop. Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) faculty and Practical Nursing faculty must meet professional standards required by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulations, and Certified Nursing Assistant faculty must meet standards required by the Illinois Department of Public Health. The ADN nursing program received initial Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) accreditation in March 2020 and received continuing accreditation with no conditions in March 2022 with the next site visit set for 2026.

The institution's evaluation process for faculty and adjunct faculty has sustained since the 2019 comprehensive visit. Full-time faculty are evaluated annually by their division chair(s) until they achieve tenure status, at which time evaluations are completed every three years. Full-time faculty are also expected to complete a self-evaluation tool. Adjunct faculty are evaluated during the first semester of teaching and then every three years unless problems occur

and/or the faculty member retires or resigns. Students evaluate all faculty each fall and spring semester. Instructors may choose one or two courses each semester they wish to have evaluated. Students from those courses complete the evaluation forms and submit the completed forms to the Executive Dean of Academic Services' office. Results are returned to faculty at the end of each semester. Faculty review the results and address strengths and weaknesses that were documented on the evaluations as part of their faculty self-evaluation. They also document any changes that have been made or will be made as a result of the student evaluation process.

Students have an opportunity to evaluate online classes every semester. The evaluation questions posted to online classes are the same as the evaluation questions for in-person classes, except those questions not relevant to the modality. For example, the online class evaluation does not ask about the instructor's punctuality to class like the in-person evaluation, since that does not pertain to the online course modality. A link to the evaluation tool is placed in each online class prior to the end of each semester. Instructors receive the evaluation results at the end of each semester and, similarly, address strengths and weaknesses in the self-evaluation tool.

SIC systemically assures professional development opportunities by including professional development in institutional budgets. SIC schedules staff-wide professional development days twice per year to address changes in education, and SIC faculty and staff attend the Higher Learning Commission conference on an annual basis. Further, a standing professional development committee schedules workshops and other activities throughout the academic year. This committee also awards $500 mini-grants for professional development, supported by the college and the SIC Foundation. All faculty and staff are eligible to apply for these grants. The human resources office provides annual sexual harassment training, as well as ethics training, that is required for all faculty and staff. Special ad hoc professional development and training are offered, such as recent employee training on the proper use of pronouns for non-binary gender identities (August 2022). Safety training is ongoing, and SIC remains adaptive to changing needs in training to stay compliant and progressive.

Adjunct instructors, including dual credit instructors, receive annual professional development training through SIC's August Academy, which consists of mandatory training prior to each fall semester. SIC's Online Learning and Educational Technology department also holds specialized workshops and training for online instruction.

SIC ensures that instructors are available to students with questions through the use of faculty schedules. Faculty schedules require 30 hours per week on campus, during the fall and spring semesters. Implemented in 2021, a minimum of six faculty office hours per week are now devoted to student support hours used strategically for student learning support, student retention, student outreach, group tutoring, academic coaching, mentoring, recruitment, individual or small group appointments. Online faculty may post virtual office hours, during which students may access them online. While adjunct faculty are not required to maintain specific office or student support hours, they provide information to students regarding availability and contact information. Many are willing to meet with students before or after class to discuss class content or hold office hours by appointment. Office space is provided for adjunct faculty in both B and G Buildings. Finally, faculty contact information (email and phone extension) is required on course outlines and is also published on SIC's faculty directory.

One area SIC has shown tremendous advancement is the level of support and resources it has allocated for student growth. In April 2022, a groundbreaking ceremony at Southeastern Illinois College's White County extension site took place for the new Stanford D. Williams Career and Training Center. Since the groundbreaking ceremony, the center began offering classes in fall 2023 in the areas of programmable logic controllers (PLC), welding, and auto/diesel technology. The primary goal of the center is to build a local workforce through modern instruction to sustain and grow trained employees for the White County region. These new efforts will promote early exposure to high-demand career options, and career exploration, and encourage career pathways so local students can work and remain in the area. Students are engaging with local business and industry through field trips, on-site speakers, and use of the state-of-the-art equipment and technology.

Also in 2022, as part of SIC's Title III grant initiatives, SIC hired a student success coach. This position provides individualized guidance and ongoing feedback to students who seek assistance through the Student Success Center. The success coach also helps students with time management skills, meeting deadlines, prioritizing commitments, study skills, test taking, and task analysis strategies. Moreover, the position serves as a mentor for students to ask questions and receive the support they need in order to be successful at SIC.

SIC continues to have two full-time academic advisors, an advisor devoted to the TRIO/SSS population, and the

recently added student services liaison position (April 2023) to provide added academic advisement assistance specifically to the CTE student population.

SIC staff provide critical support services such as tutoring, financial aid, advising, veteran services, disability support services, TRIO Student Support Services, and co-curricular activities. All staff members providing student support services must possess degrees, certifications, and experience relevant to their positions. Financial aid staff are available Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to help with financial aid applications or to answer student questions. Support staff are evaluated annually. Staff also receive ongoing training and may attend regional or national conferences to advance their knowledge base.

SIC also provides tutoring services to support student learning. A combination of professional and peer tutors is available to help students in various content areas, such as math, science, and English. The college's TRIO program also offers tutoring to students who qualify for and participate in the program.

SIC's White County extension site is an Illinois Worknet Center and maintains an affiliation with the local workforce investment board, which provides for a Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) representative on-site to assist community members in need of services.

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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).

Argument

SIC provides targeted support to student populations with diverse needs. While SIC continues to serve 20-50 students with documented physical and learning disabilities each semester, the institution has enhanced support for these student populations through many grants. The college has branched out of its institutional walls to help in-district high school students in these categories.

SIC received an ICCB grant in October 2020, which allowed the college to partner with a local high school to provide targeted programs and services to assist ADA students at Eldorado High School in preparing for education beyond high school. The program also provided guaranteed summer job positions on SIC's campus for participating students. SIC received positive reviews and continued the grant with Eldorado High School plus added Galatia High School in the 2021-2022 academic year; the college received the grant for a third time in the 2022-2023 academic year with Eldorado High School and Carmi-White County High Schools participating.

The Accelerated College Experience or ACE program began in the fall of 2022 and works with the district's high-achieving high school students to help them prepare for college. This program is designed to motivate academically talented students to have a competitive advantage in college admissions and scholarship applications through service learning, test preparation, and communication training. ACE also creates an academic cohort in which gifted students at surrounding high schools can come together in one group setting to discuss their next steps after high school. By implementing volunteer experience, ACT/SAT test prep, developing relationships for positive letters of recommendation, and learning how to write and speak professionally to earn high school scholarships, this program challenges the district's best and brightest high school students.

To assist high school students enrolled in the ACE program, as well as high school students enrolled in dual credit courses through SIC, the college employs a full-time high school recruiter/dual credit coordinator. This individual also helps register students for courses in each program, acts as an SIC on-campus liaison for high school students, and monitors the academic performance of students enrolled in those programs throughout the semester to ensure success.

In September 2022, SIC was awarded the federal Upward Bound (UB) grant. The program is designed to increase the number of high school students who are first-generation, low-income, and/or those with disabilities by helping them enroll in and graduate from institutions of post-secondary education. The program targets five local high schools and is funded to serve 60 students. UB students receive after-school tutoring assistance; ACT/SAT preparation; scholarship information; college application assistance; dual credit assistance/information; academic and personal counseling; study skills and professional development workshops; cultural enrichment activities and trips; campus visits; financial aid literacy education; FAFSA assistance; and a six-week summer enrichment program.

The SIC-UB summer enrichment program is a six-week college simulation program. Student participants are transported to SIC's main campus in Harrisburg where they complete academic courses, receive academic support, and participate in activities to develop student success and social-emotional skills. Additionally, Upward Bound provides a summer bridge program for graduated seniors. The summer bridge program is available to all UB participants who have graduated from high school, have been accepted to a post-secondary institution, and have participated in the UB

program during the previous academic school year. Participants may enroll in up to six credit hours of college courses at SIC during the summer.

SIC promotes student success by addressing real physical needs of students, such as hunger. The Freddie Falcon Food Pantry is open year-round for in-need students who may wish to obtain non-perishable food items. The Pantry is overseen by student government. In fall 2023, SIC allocated $10,000 in meal cards and $10,000 in fuel cards to assist students experiencing financial challenges, as part of ICCB's College Bridge Grant initiative. This intervention enabled the college to provide aid to 140 students. Additionally, in January 2024, SIC hosted a clothing giveaway to address students' needs beyond food insecurity. Clothing items were donated by faculty and staff, and students had a two-day period to take whatever they needed without restriction. Any clothing items remaining were donated to a local homeless shelter.

SIC maintains several spaces and resources to support effective teaching and learning. In January 2020 SIC unveiled the new Learning Commons on-campus, a renovation and re-imagining of the Melba Patton Library. The Learning Commons (LC) still offers standard library services, such as book check-out, electronic databases, and research materials to students, but has expanded services to include student photo ID printing, interactive collaborative learning, free printing of course materials, and assistance with accessing student e-mail/MySIC accounts and other technology issues. The LC also provides alternative and forward-thinking ways of learning by using 3D printing and virtual reality equipment available for student use. With a faux fireplace, designated quiet areas, a technology bar, and a variety of games, like chess and Giant Jenga, the LC can be a place for students to relax and unwind between classes as well. The renovations of the physical space made it possible to house the testing center, writing center, peer science tutor, and student success coach in the Learning Commons, making it a one-stop shop for many student services on campus. Moreover, Online Learning and Educational Technology (OLET), housed in the LC, has made additional resources available for students and faculty through a research and library resources link in Canvas LMS. This was launched in February 2024 and provides a link to the library page in a user-friendly manner right from a student's main page of any online or hybrid class.

In 2021, Southeastern was awarded a Title III Strengthening Institutions federal grant of $2.2 million over five years through the Department of Education. As part of the Title III initiative, federal grant funds have allowed for the renovation of the Dana Keating Student Success Center. With these funds, SIC has implemented a math and writing center, installed a new ceiling throughout the student success center, implemented better security cameras, constructed two new office build-outs, and overhauled the testing center. The writing and math center was renovated during Year One (2021) of the Title III project, and Year Two (2022) provided SIC with use of the center for continued utilization. The center provides faculty and professional tutors with comfortable instructional and discussion areas with impressive technology to aid in learning. For example, a large touch-screen Microsoft hub surface has been used by the instructors and based on discussion feedback has been helpful. There are three functional, mobile tables that may be moved around by the instructor if student activity warrants. Fifteen laptops and 10 iPads are kept in the center in a locked charging station for students to use, as needed. SIC also utilized project funds to purchase wi-fi hot spots for use by students when the campus is closed. Further, the student Student Success Center has been sound-proofed. All of this was provided through federal grant dollars via Title III.

Other grants, such as Delta Regional Authority (DRA) and Pipeline for Advancement of the Healthcare Workforce (PATH), have provided opportunities for students in select programs on campus to have access to new and innovative resources. For example, the nursing program has begun using virtual reality equipment to augment the use of mannequin simulators when teaching students how to perform certain tasks and examinations. According to the Associate Dean of Nursing and Allied Health, *"the use of this equipment is vital to rural areas such as ours to provide clinical experiences in high specialty areas they otherwise would not receive."* Students in SIC's welding program will also be able to benefit from the use of virtual reality experiences once the equipment is received on campus through grant funds. Grant money has also been used to provide equipment for the certified nurse assisting program at the White County extension site.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

SIC enlists skilled and accredited instructors to deliver a wide range of transfer and career and technical education coursework to students through a variety of modalities on its Harrisburg, Carmi, and online locations. These courses allow students to establish learning goals appropriate for individual paths including transfer, CTE, and dual credit/enrollment and may cover such areas of emphasis as general education, cultural diversity, and student engagement.

Faculty and staff are vetted by a human resources department and a hiring committee which adheres to Higher Learning Commission and Illinois Community College Board standards, as well as specialized accreditation standards for relevant programs. They are constantly enriched through continuing education, regional and national conferences, and share scholarly development with colleagues and students. They are held accountable by regular employee reviews, and their work is monitored by regular program reviews.

SIC students are supported by a network of faculty and staff committed to their success. Academic advisement is provided for students each semester. Instructors are accessible to students through contractually required student support hours. In addition, staff members are readily available to provide student support services. Students may also access co-curricular programs that complement their studies and promote active learning through student engagement. Specialized spaces, such as the Learning Commons, student success center, campus computer labs, smart classrooms, art galleries, and the Outdoor Education Complex, as well as new technologies including upgraded Wi-Fi, high-fidelity simulators, and a 3-D printer, further support student learning goals.

These specific examples, outlined in detail above, show SIC has carefully designed policies and procedures in place to promote the integrity of its educational climate and the people therein.

Sources

There are no sources.

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.

Argument

Southeastern demonstrates and secures the quality of its educational programs through rigorous review, ongoing evaluation, and robust policies that protect the integrity of the learning process. The college adheres to the Illinois Community College Board requirements outlined in the statewide system for the review of instructional programs, strategic campus planning, and decision-making related to instructional programming and academic support.

A key component of assessment at SIC is the program review process, which is used to assess the strength and effectiveness of the college's many instructional, support, and student services programs. SIC conducts annual program reviews with programs undergoing review on a five-year rotation. Program review is directed by the curriculum committee, consisting of faculty and academic support personnel, and is focused on career and technical education programs, academic disciplines, cross-disciplinary instruction, student and academic support services, and any important program changes and improvements made as a result of campus planning and quality improvement. Faculty compile program review summaries, which are reviewed by the curriculum committee and administration before being submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval. The final program review report is submitted to ICCB after all internal approvals.

Components of the program review process analysis include:

- course outlines;
- level of community engagement;
- instructional support;
- teaching strategies;
- assessment practices;
- human resources;
- enrollment patterns;
- *cost-effectiveness analysis*;*
- program outreach, and;
- *performance and equity**

To promote consistency across campus, each program being reviewed adheres to the same form found in the comprehensive program review manual. The program review form has been updated and revised since the last HLC visit in 2019 to require additional information on *equity gaps* and *financial data* to ensure programs meet diversity needs and cost-effectiveness measures.

Additionally, since 2019, the college has adopted a state-led initiative for multiple measures to determine placement into college-level coursework, including English and math classes. These measures may include high school coursework and GPA, ACT/SAT scores, dual credit, and college placement test scores which help to certify students can meet the rigor required in the general education coursework. The college continues to use NEXTGEN Accuplacer as the preferred placement test for students.

SIC evaluates its own course offerings in terms of the college's credit hour definition to determine credit hours transcripted for those courses. With the appropriate documentation, the Enrollment Services Office will receive, review, and accept varied types of prior learning for college credit according to the following board policies and administrative procedures, including:

- correctional training credit (BP 9008)
- early college and dual credit (BP 9002.6, 9002.7)
- college-level examination program (CLEP) (BP 9023)
- advanced placement (AP) (BP 9023)
- State Seal of Biliteracy (BP 9023.1)
- international baccalaureate credit (IB) (BP 9023)
- proficiency credit

Credit is also awarded for experiential learning through the Technical Resource Management Associate of Applied Science degree. Through this degree program, students document their work experience and provide sufficient evidence to support their request for credit, which is approved by the appropriate faculty, academic dean and/or vice president.

Transfer students from other colleges or universities are admitted based on the same admission criteria as other students and must also complete the admission process, per Board Policy 9024. This information is outlined in the college catalog (*page 13*) and on the college's website, under the "Admissions" tab.

SIC faculty have primary responsibility for establishing course prerequisites, rigor, and syllabi. A master course outline with a federal credit hour audit form is created for each course and is available to all full and part-time faculty on the *Intrinsic*. The master outline serves as a template for all faculty teaching the course to ensure consistency with course objectives and prerequisites. Faculty have the option of adding information to the syllabus beyond what is standard for the course.

For new programs or course development, faculty must submit appropriate forms to their division chair(s) and academic dean for approval. Once the course has been approved, the course is submitted to the curriculum committee, which reviews and approves the course after ensuring appropriate prerequisite(s) and measurable learning outcomes are identified. All approved items are then presented to the college President and Board of Trustees for final approval before submission to the Illinois Community College Board for state approval. If approved, the change will be applied to the ICCB course master and become a course offering at the college. If the course is a general education course, it will be submitted to IAI for approval. Within this past year, IAI required that online IAI math courses be proctored to validate course integrity. In response, SIC purchased the proctoring service, Honorlock, to meet state requirements.

As an example of the course development process, the college recently created a new Industrial Maintenance certificate program to be offered at the Stanford D. Williams Career and Training Center at the college's Carmi location. The program was constructed through a collaborative effort of faculty, staff, and community advisors to help with growing a local workforce, and was submitted through the same review process outlined above. Upon approval, the program was implemented in the fall of 2023 with 10 high school students participating in the inaugural class. The next short-term certificate program to be developed in fall 2024 is in industrial arts to be offered at the Carmi location.

The college adheres to the faculty credential policy with regard to certifying all full-time, adjunct, and dual credit

faculty meet minimum educational requirements as outlined by HLC and ICCB. Faculty teaching general education courses or other non-occupational courses must hold a master's degree in the teaching discipline or hold a master's degree and have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the teaching discipline. Faculty teaching in a career and technical education program must hold a minimum of an associate degree and/or a combination of education, training, and tested experience. All faculty credentials are reviewed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Executive Dean of Academic Services, and division chairs in cooperation with the Human Resources Director to make certain minimum requirements have been met.

The college partners with 10 district high schools to offer dual credit opportunities to high school students in both transfer and career-related coursework. SIC adheres to ICCB administrative rules and state legislation for dual credit, providing guidance for dual credit instructors, students, course offerings, course requirements, and course delivery. As part of the college's dual credit initiatives, an early college program is available for eligible district high school students, allowing students to complete baccalaureate transfer courses and online career and technical education courses at a reduced cost. SIC also offers a variety of career and technical education courses for dual credit at district high schools, the college's main campus, and at the additional site location in Carmi.

In 2022-2023 academic year, SIC's dual credit CTE Afternoon Academy was implemented to encourage career exploration in diesel technology, powersports, and welding. Students attend classes in the afternoon five days a week each semester on the college's main campus. Twenty-eight (28) students were enrolled in the Academy in the first year. The following year, enrollments grew to 53 in fall 2023 with the addition of health occupations as an added component of the CTE Afternoon Academy, offering coursework in certified nurse assisting, phlebotomy, and pharmacy technician, as options for students.

According to the recently revised (2024) Illinois' Dual Credit Quality Act, to participate in dual credit and/or dual enrollment coursework, students are generally at junior and senior levels in high school and must meet all prerequisites and eligibility requirements, including completing a high school registration form each semester, attaching a copy of their high school transcripts, and taking appropriate placement tests, as needed. High school students enrolled in dual credit and/or dual enrolled classes must follow the same course enrollment and withdrawal policies as for all SIC students. All coursework offered for dual credit and/or dual enrollment meets the same requirements and rigor as those courses offered on-campus and online for college credit. Additionally, high school instructors teaching dual credit courses meet the same credential requirements as college faculty. The college's dual credit model partnership agreements are initiated, reviewed, and approved annually by the Executive Dean of Academic Services as part of the oversight process. These agreements are then sent to and reviewed by the school districts for approval.

As part of the review process, the college initiated fidelity surveys in the fall of 2023 as an assessment tool to be completed in person for all dual credit classes offered at the district high schools. SIC faculty members completed these survey reports to ensure quality, consistency, and rigor with coursework and materials. Feedback from the surveys revealed that high school dual credit faculty are overall satisfied with their teaching assignments and interactions with the college.

Dual credit enrollments have steadily grown in recent years. For example, dual credit enrollment increased from 418 students in 2021-2022 to 825 in 2023-2024. This is due to the introduction of the CTE Afternoon Academy, the expansion of dual credit to the college's off-site location, and an increase in course offerings within the district high schools, mainly in the vocational area.

Southeastern provides access to learning resources including open-access computer labs and academic labs supporting educational programs and learning. As previously noted, Learning Commons (LC) provides an extensive number of traditional and online resources for student and faculty use. The student success coach is housed in the LC, as well as professional and peer tutoring services available through scheduled appointments and walk-ins. The Online Learning and Educational Technology department (OLET) maintains the learning management system, *Canvas,* used in online instruction and for use with supplemental materials to support traditional courses. OLET also houses the Teaching and Learning Center which is specifically designed for faculty training and professional development opportunities.

Disability services are coordinated with the ADA Coordinator, located in Enrollment Services. The Dana Keating Student Success Center encompasses the testing center, along with TRIO/SSS and Upward Bound programs. The TRIO/SSS program offers academic assistance and services to college-age students meeting specific eligibility

requirements, including first-generation, lower economic, and/or disability status.The Upward Bound (UB) program serves high school students who also meet similar eligibility requirements by offering tutoring services, as well as a summer enrichment program. The college's Title III program and staff are also housed in the Student Success Center, offering academic support for developmental education.

With regard to specialized accreditations, SIC's diesel technology medium heavy-duty truck program is certified by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE). Diesel technology faculty must complete a minimum of 20 hours of professional development annually as part of the program's special accreditation. Most recently, the Associate Degree Nursing Program (ADN) became accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) in 2022. These specialized accreditations not only ensure an elevated level of rigor for these academic programs, but also confirm that graduates of these programs are well-trained, meet industry standards, and are competitive as they pursue jobs upon graduation.

Additionally, the college utilizes a variety of measures to make certain that its degree and certificate programs are of quality and rigor and meet the highest industry standards. For example, many of the college's technical and healthcare-related programs meet and/or exceed state licensure passage rates. SIC's ADN nursing program had a 96% passage rate in 2023 on the NCLEX-RN with the PN passage rate of 100% in the same year compared with the state average of 85% and 88%, respectively. Passage rates for nursing, pharmacy technician, and cosmetology are posted on their respective pages on the college's website. In 2022, Cosmetology had a 100% pass rate. This past year, welding students taking the American Welding Society (AWS) certification exam achieved 100% pass rate.

The institutional student satisfaction survey was updated in 2020 and then again in spring 2021. The updates included a modernization relating to relevant questions concerning student satisfaction and need. Since the updates, the response rate has increased from 86 responses in spring 2020 to 258 responses in spring 2024. Relatedly, overall reported student satisfaction has increased from 63% in 2020 to 86% in spring 2024.

The college continues to improve its data collection and analysis methods relating to student success and satisfaction. Externally, state (ICCB) and national (IPEDS) reports provide a broader view of student success compared to established cohorts. In addition to external validation, the college utilizes many internal measures through its benchmarking project to gauge student success. Most recently, the Institutional Research (IR) department designed a data dashboard that displays these benchmarks, KPI's, and general institutional data which is both interactive and easily updated. This improvement allows IR to share data across campus and with external stakeholders. This data is also posted publicly on the college's website under "*Accountability"* and on the "*benchmark dashboard"* page. Recent data indicates first-time/full-time student retention rate of 74%, first-time/full-time completion rate of 39% (150% time), and a traditional coursework retention rate of 65%.

Student success is also tracked through a series of graduate follow-up surveys. Institutional Effectiveness (IE) began the college's first all graduate follow-up survey in 2023. The response rate was very low, and IE will continue to work with IT and Student Services to improve our student response rate. CTE programs along with Allied Health receive an annual graduate follow-up survey. CTE surveys past graduates on their experience(s) with the program(s) and employment information. Based on low rates of return from past survey results, future plans include the use of an electronic survey to be e-mailed and/or texted. Also, due to the nature of the CTE programs and the close relationship with industry partners, faculty receive graduate testimonials of their employment and post-graduate success. With the addition of a CTE dean in the fall of 2024, a more formalized plan to evaluate success of graduates will be developed in concert with current activities.

As transfer services are one of the primary functions for all community colleges in Illinois, as well as a measure of increasing student success, in 2021 SIC began meticulously tracking each graduating high school senior and their destination after high school. The product of such data analysis resulted in three separate reports compiled by the Executive Dean of Student Services. The first report utilizes our own ERP system and the *National Student Clearinghouse* to determine the rate at which graduating seniors attend college (Going Nowhere). Data from the report demonstrate a growing trend of students not attending post-secondary education. For example in 2019, nearly 35% of high school graduates did not attend college or enter the workforce. By 2022, that number had risen to 40%.

The second and third reports are designed along the same lines but used to determine where graduating high school seniors attend college (In-District High School Matriculation), and where our graduates are going once they complete at SIC (SIC Graduate Transfer Analysis). These reports are used to help the college formulate transfer articulation

agreements with local four-year universities and to increase our own understanding of student needs. The data from all three reports is used in recruiting efforts, included in our student retention project, and most recently became the backdrop to the college's Strategic Enrollment Management plan.

Combined with follow-up graduate studies, and our own internally designed post-secondary tracking system, SIC has helped close the loop on evaluating the success of our students to ensure the strength of our credentials prepares graduates for advanced study or employment.

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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.

Argument

The assessment process remains a top priority for SIC. From the last successful HLC visit, enhancements to the college's assessment practices have included the development of curriculum mapping for use with general education assessment, and the refinement of co-curricular assessment. Additionally, assessment template forms are reviewed annually and updated as needed by the assessment committee. As an example, within the past few years, CTE goals have been added to the assessment form, and separate forms were created for curricular and co-curricular assessment. In 2019, college representatives attended an HLC workshop on general education assessment which led to the development of curriculum mapping. Curriculum mapping plays a vital role in the assessment process by providing a structured, visual framework for evaluating student learning outcomes and aligning them with instructional goals. Curriculum mapping also provides evidence that all general educational goals are being met.

In terms of instruction and learning, SIC assesses student learning at the course-level and program level, which informs the assessment of the general education goals and general performance indicators. To that end, course learning outcomes are mapped to general education goals and general performance indicators to ensure that students will meet all general education goals over a two-year period. At the course level, faculty annually assess the quality and effectiveness of their courses to guarantee that their means of assessment evaluate the achievement of student learning outcomes and address institutional and general education goals. Most recently, the college adopted five main target areas, commonly referred to as general performance indicators. These include *ethics and integrity, critical thinking, technology literacy,* and *social and cultural awareness*. Faculty are encouraged to implement two to three of the five target areas into their assessment plans each year, as a lens in which to direct their assessment projects. Further, instructional assessment must choose at least one general education goal to be addressed and tested in the project. As previously noted, curriculum mapping proves students have the possibility to receive all general education goals in a two-year period. This specifically addresses the previous HLC team's recommendation to engage a more defined process of measuring general education goals. All courses that are part of the general education curriculum are required to be assessed as part of the annual assessment cycle; however, other additional courses should be assessed every other year.

Under the guidance of members of the assessment committee, faculty and staff are allowed to use a variety of methods to prove that they are measuring course objectives. These include, but are not limited to:

- pre-tests/post-tests
- performance checklists
- state board passage rates
- embedded questions
- observational studies
- journals
- student evaluations
- community surveys.

Additionally, CTE programs continue to use of a variety of assessment means including, but not limited to, industry-specific standards, employer surveys, and NOCTI (National Occupational Competency Testing Institute) tests. The college also relies on external validation for certain programs to provide evidence of the achievement of student

objectives and college goals within those programs. Examples include licensure pass rates for allied health programs, certification rates for other career and technical education programs, and standards from external accreditors, such as ASE for diesel and ACEN for nursing. Of note is that since 2021, SIC's PN nursing pass rates have increased from 95% to 100%.

Program and course objectives, including student learning outcomes, are developed by faculty and reviewed and approved by the college's curriculum committee, which provides oversight for the quality and rigor of the institution's academic programs and the program review process. Over the last few years, faculty have strengthened their focus with the use of results or "closing the loop" to provide evidence that assessment projects are ongoing and simply do not end when the tested project is over. SIC strongly believes and demonstrates that assessment should remain a continuous process. A few examples of "closing the loop" from recent years have included:

- ADN faculty incorporating Next Generation-style NCLEX exam questions into current testing to help nursing students with clinical reasoning and judgment, emphasizing better patient safety outcomes; and
- General Biology faculty expanding genetics lectures to include an introduction and discussion on eugenics, designer babies, and the moral and ethical implications of each, mirroring real-world debate.

Lastly, Southeastern's co-curricular activities and support areas are held to the same rigorous assessment standards and follow the same procedures that are utilized during the course assessment process. In 2021, the assessment committee re-evaluated co-curricular areas, based on guidance from HLC resources, and expanded these areas to include additional academic support areas, such as learning commons and tutoring services. Co-curricular assessment is established on a biennial schedule, using a different form from instructional and non-instructional areas. Included are a few examples of co-curricular assessment projects, including Student Government and Circle K, highlighting "closing the loop" section and use of results.

Overall, SIC's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice and include participation from both faculty and staff to demonstrate the ongoing assessment of student learning and engagement.

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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.)

Argument

The new strategic plan, *Moving Forward Together 2023-2027*, outlines a broad set of initiatives designed to grow the economic mobility of the district by increasing the educational attainment level of the communities we serve. In this regard, the college has defined outcome measures that closely align with the college's mission to serve a rural population with *quality, accessible, and accountable learning*. These metrics include enrollment trends, closing equity gaps, retention, persistence, completion rates, degree/certificate production, and continuing our successes in reducing developmental coursework.

With the creation of the division of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) in 2021, the college focused efforts on updating and enhancing its benchmarks and key performance indicators (KPIs). This effort was largely supported by the purchase of data visualization software, *Tableau,* and by refocusing institutional efforts on designing a modern data-informed campus. The result of such efforts produced a new benchmark dashboard containing up-to-date student success metrics -- all designed to measure strategic planning initiatives. All KPIs are posted publicly on the college website. A summary of results is reported annually to cabinet, then distributed and discussed broadly at campus forums, department meetings, and committee meetings to engage faculty and staff on student success measures relevant to highlighting and, when necessary, closing achievement gaps.

In 2022, the college established the student retention project in response to the new strategic plan and the many pandemic-related challenges and changes facing the higher education landscape. This approach enabled the college to design a proactive evidenced-based analytics dashboard for student retention. Developed using *Tableau* software, this dashboard uses predictive variables such as demographics, test scores, age, economic need, and many other variables to provide real-time analytics to college advisors and retention specialists. The private-facing dashboard allows student services to create cohorts for progress monitoring or to apply analysis to specific student groups such as veterans, low socioeconomic status (SES), or program level such as nursing.

The college also continues to fine-tune its early alert system, Starfish. Most recently, using Title III funds, the college purchased the premium analytics package that allows Title III student retention and success professionals to identify at-risk students and provide them access to additional supportive resources and/or services. Initial results from Starfish data indicate that intervention efforts from flag-raising by faculty and staff have been successful with over 71% of identified at-risk students being retained from one semester to the next. Since this is the first full year of data, we expect intervention and retention efforts to continue with positive results as we learn more about the data analytics package.

Additionally, the college utilizes data collection methods provided by the ICCB to track student retention, persistence, and completion metrics for IPEDS and the five-year program review cycle. ICCB student success metrics are also used to monitor a range of institutional data to inform our equity-focused strategic initiatives. Most recently, for example,

ICCB provided disaggregated data to help identify equity gaps in student success outcomes. This data was used in the institution's FY25 Equity Plan and the consumer information report for student diversity, retention, and completion disclosures. Since this is the first year for the Equity Plan, the Equity Gaps Taskforce will continue planning and designing intervention techniques to address identified gaps. Additionally, the FY25 Equity Plan outlines several initiatives that will guide the college in its first year for addressing equitable student outcomes, as well as integrate equity gaps into our overall strategic planning effort to *advance student success*.

To supplement its institutional research capabilities and expand its understanding of quantitative persistence and completion data, SIC has revamped its survey data collection and established a two-year survey review and administration cycle. This new process allows for institutional effectiveness and student services to consult, monitor, and analyze student surveys for possible updates or reconfigurations. The latest round of updates came in 2023 when the executive dean of institutional effectiveness and the executive dean of student services collaborated to remove survey questions about the COVID-19 pandemic and add questions about student mental health. The premise for such changes was the direct result of student survey responses concerning their mental health during the pandemic, which led to the hiring of a student mental health counselor. Such planning resulted from the culture created by strategic initiatives, more specifically initiatives two and three. DEI questions were added to the 2024 student satisfaction survey. Since the adoption of *Moving Forward Together*, a comprehensive strategic enrollment management plan has been developed that will directly align and link recruitment and retention to the plan.

Supported by its participation in the Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) and the Central/Southern Illinois Community College Research Group, SIC has continued its culture of data-driven decision-making. Most recently in 2021, SIC sent attendees to the National Symposium on Benchmarking and attended webinar training from the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP). After the trainings, the division of institutional effectiveness embarked on the college's very own benchmark project in 2021. Utilizing *Tableau*, the college now tracks over 40 benchmarks and reports annually to the president's cabinet and strategic planning committee. The benchmark project is modeled after the NCCBP, and data is shared with the consortium. Recognized in 2019 and again 2021 by the Aspen Institute as a Top 150 community college, SIC is proud of its data efforts focusing on student success. As such, SIC continues to use data to develop strategies that improve student outcomes.

Using recently designed dashboards, SIC tracks a series of initiatives including IPEDS and internal measurements. During this time, IPEDS first-time retention rates have increased from 63% to 74% (first-time/full-time) and from 30% to 41% (first-time/part-time) respectively. IPEDS graduation rates for first-time entering students have increased from 25% in 2021 to 42% in 2023. Internal measures, such as all degree/certificate-seeking retention, have increased from 39% in 2021 to 46% in 2023. These measures align with best practices and are compared and tracked with our IPEDS cohorts. All measures, including many more, are tracked through our dashboards located on our institutional research webpage.

Since 2019, the college has continued to review developmental coursework completion and engage in actions to improve. In 2021, the college participated in the statewide initiative Developmental Education Reduction Act (DERA), designed to reduce students' time spent in developmental coursework thus increasing their time to completion. Continuing with the college's success with the co-requisite model, in 2022 the institution increased student allotment using multiple measures for its available sections for the co-req model in both English and math. Though math sections have lagged, new multiple measures were put in place in 2024 to increase student success in co-req math. However, co-req developmental English has increased from 64% to 70%. In comparison, co-req developmental English success rates remain 10 points higher than traditional developmental English, 92% to 82%. These changes have increased the percentage of students completing college-level math and English in their first year.

Another recent improvement in developmental math is the creation of one credit hour course, focused on supporting students in Math 144 Heart of Mathematics and serving as a co-requisite course for college-level math retention and completion. Math 110 Support Skills for Heart of Mathematics provides the integrated review for the concurrent Math 144 transfer course, focusing on supportive skills in topics that will be studied in-depth during Math 144. The course was created by math faculty in conjunction with academic services to expedite students through math sequencing as part of DERA. It is intended for students completing their A.A. or A.S. degree and for students whose major interests are not in engineering or the physical sciences. Math 110 was approved by ICCB on May 30, 2024, and will be implemented in spring 2025.

In 2020, IE updated the college's Institutional Review Board (IRB) along with all methodologies for data collection.

This helped the college create a central location for data governance as well as the approval process for both internal and external requests for data or research. All requests regarding data collection, including requests for surveys, must be approved by the Executive Dean of Institutional Effectiveness.

SIC's policies and methodologies regarding data collection and data analysis related to retention, persistence, and completion reflect national and state best practices, thus allowing the college to reflectively compare with our peers. Institutional Research staff are active members in ICCB research projects and data groups and remain members of the Association of Institutional Researchers and the Illinois Association of Institutional Researchers. The college also uses resources from other research groups like the Office of Community College Research and Leadership at the University of Illinois, the Center for Community College Research at New York University, and the Rural Community College Alliance, to name a few. These memberships, peer researcher groups, and regional meetings are routine ways in which SIC gains access to training, peer initiatives, data, and best practice material. Immediate examples of processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing student success outcomes include the continued establishment of campus working groups such as the equity gaps taskforce, the support success taskforce, and the strategic enrollment management sub-committee.

Ultimately, the college remains true to its mission of providing *quality, accessible, and accountable learning* through systematic review and analysis of internal and external factors impacting student success. SIC, in just a few short years, has transformed its data landscape, enhanced educational offerings, created an institutional focus on equity gaps, and presented the campus with an awareness for collecting and utilizing student success metrics to improve student outcomes.

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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.

Summary

To sustain the quality and continuous improvement of its educational programs, environment, and services, Southeastern Illinois College continues to practice regular, high-quality program reviews integrated with the annual reporting process and supported by data from the institutional research office. The college has promoted strong oversight by faculty governance, academic leaders, administrators, and where appropriate, specialized accreditations. The college has maintained high-quality and faculty-driven assessment practices and has continually reviewed and adapted practices supporting improvements in student retention, persistence, and completion using data-driven, decision-making processes.

Sources

There are no sources.

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.

Argument

Southeastern Illinois College (SIC) continues to promote collaboration within its organizational structures to fulfill its mission. A shared governance model is promoted by the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students in its planning, policies, and procedures, via policy. A balanced, representative committee structure continues to provide valuable service to the institution, each with its own mission statement developed by committees since the last commission visit. This all works within a defined protocol of organizational structure that has been updated due to some internal reorganization as needed. The president also continues to utilize a cabinet of senior officers from the college and a broader council with key middle management staff to advise on key areas of operations. Regarding additional campus communication, the president provides regular updates on key issues relevant to the college community. Board agendas and minutes are posted for public view.

Additionally, the college's strategic planning process has been validated by accreditors in the past. The college continues to refine the process as it recently began its new five-year planning process, as detailed in its cycle adjustment to operational plan creation and reporting, whereby plans are created in the spring to be implemented in the next fall via a new calendar. This process included a representative committee of administration, staff, and faculty. The process fosters a methodical means of checks and balances with plenty of opportunities for feedback from both broader staff and the Board of Trustees, as evidenced by committee minutes, staff development days, campus communications, and public opportunity at board meetings to address the plan. As well, college administration integrated the student voice into this planning process not only by having a representative on the committee, but also utilizing a student-led survey of critical issues for them for the strategic planning committee to entertain.

The administration uses available data to shape its recommendations. For instance, recent examples since the last HLC (Higher Learning Commission) campus visit include:

- High school CTE afternoon academy: This was created based on data analysis of the 'go nowhere' population of high school graduates who do not attend post-secondary education, as well as workforce needs;
- Mental health counselor: This position was created due to analysis of national and local data, as well as an increase of student mental health issues on campus, such as attempted student suicides in the private apartment buildings adjacent to SIC's campus;
- Expansion of criminal justice training: Evidence from local and regional police such as K-9, gun use, and search/rescue opportunities. SIC sponsors these training courses now.

SIC administration has engaged local industry and educational partners to shape the curriculum at the newly constructed Stanford D. Williams Career and Training Center in Carmi, Illinois, which was partially built from a

generous donation of just over one-half-million dollars.

The SIC Foundation continues to grow and support the college as evidenced by its quarterly meetings. Additional donations have been received by the college, including an estate gift valued of over $7 million for construction use and operations for the Ella Elizabeth Hise Museum of Regional Art, built with donor funds. Over two consecutive years (2023 and 2024), the College and Ferrell Hospital have co-hosted an evening of entertainment with *"Howl At The Moon"* to raise over $50,000 in total toward the Title III grant endowment match. Scholarships have continued to grow, and support has not waned. Additionally, a new donor board was established in the visual and performing arts center (VPAC) lobby to showcase community support. Growth of annual giving has more than doubled.

As for broader participation beyond strategic planning, the curriculum committee and academic leadership group are two major bodies on campus with broad representation of employee type that continue to provide guidance and input that shape academics and general institutional governance policies and procedures. For example, the curriculum committee's most recent minutes demonstrate continued work on curriculum changes and program review. As for the leadership group, a review of minutes demonstrates continued attention to key issues that guide the institution. Budget hearings continue to be open for visitors on a regular schedule. Hiring committees are comprised of varied stakeholders per the college's hiring manual, as evidenced by sample committee compositions.

Finally, the SIC Board of Trustees has engaged in extensive professional development and policy review in preparation for the 2024 CEO transition. In October 2023, the board held a workshop led by Dr. Gary Davis, former executive director of the Illinois Trustees Association, which focused on board communication and a review of BP 2006 and BP 2007. In March 2024, the board held a retreat led by the ACCT (Association of Community College Trustees) on governance and communication. Additionally, Jim Reed, executive director of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association, will be presenting to the board and new president on Board-CEO relations in the fall of 2024. Further, multiple board policies on governance and communication have been revised (e.g., BP 2002, BP 2003, and BP 2012).

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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.

Argument

SIC's resource base supports its current and planned educational offerings. A review of SIC's most current budgets (FY23 and FY24) demonstrates there is no significant deviation of past fiscal planning that has resulted in the college maintaining a strong fund balance, living within its means, and allocating funds primarily to students and central services. Aside from a strategic drawdown of saved funds for the college's match to the state for the construction of the Carmi career building expansion, budgets have ended strong as audits prove. Monthly cashflow has improved over the years including unrestricted cash reserve donor funds held by the college as well as general operating funds. Enrollments have rebounded from the dips due to the pandemic, with SIC leading most Illinois community colleges in enrollment for fall 2022 and remaining solid in fall 2023. Hiring processes continue to be a hallmark of our shared governance model as verified by the committee structure for all new hires. Credentials continue to be a strong focus at SIC with the college not requesting an extension for dual credit faculty to obtain appropriate credentials.

In terms of infrastructure since 2019, the college has undergone the most extensive renovation to its main campus in the history of the institution and added a new multi-million-dollar career and training center at the off-site location. As for renovations, the college has renovated the following areas since the last HLC team visit:

- Fitness Center
- Multiple classrooms
- Gymnasium
- Information Technology suite
- New flooring across campus
- Visual and Performing Arts Center (VPAC)
- Baseball and softball complex
- K-9 police training outdoor facility
- Outdoor recreation areas, including a disc golf course and trap range
- Grounds improvements such as pond renovation

The board held a board retreat in March 2024 to review the latest updates. The college's master facilities and improvement plan is updated annually with plans to engage another 15-year master plan shortly after this HLC Assurance Review. These improvements are part of the master facilities and improvement plan which continues to be followed by the college. The new Stanford D. Williams Career and Training Center in Carmi is a $5.5 million project funded by a private donor, state of Illinois funds, and local dollars the college has saved. This facility will bring valuable training and services to constituents in the northern part of SIC's district.

Technological support continues to evolve with new software and cybersecurity upgrades, including purchasing a robust cybersecurity system (Crowdstrike) designed to monitor the college's entire network infrastructure 24-hours a day, 365 days a year in 2024. The college switched to Canvas as its online learning management platform, based on input from faculty and staff.

The college can fund these projects through careful planning. The FY23 budget included a drawdown of saved funds over the years reserved for the Carmi project, resulting in a planned red budget. However, the college still maintains a

strong cash reserve per Board Policy as evidenced in the latest audit. Budgeting has proven sound year after year with careful attention to available funds and realistic expenditures as documented by recent audits. Fiscal modeling and open budget meetings for all budget officers, including faculty, continue at SIC. Additionally, SIC's CFI (Composite Financial Index) scores and MAPS scores in comparison to regional colleges are all very positive. Continued strong fiscal management has positioned SIC to be on solid ground to face future challenges.

The college continues to maintain a strong full-time instructor base. New positions were created in commercial driver's licenses, outfitter, and wildlife management programs. Select reductions in low enrollment programs that either could not be shared with sister schools (i.e., art) or were duplicated on campus (i.e., business) or were phased out. New faculty positions are planned in growth areas, such as Ag Mechanics. All full- and part-time instructors must continue to meet the Board's credentials policy based on the commission's and ICCB's guidelines. SIC maintains a healthy ratio of student to faculty (1:18), and student to admin (1:88) and continues to offer one of the smallest ratios compared to our peers.

Support staff for student services are qualified and have been added since the last visit. For instance, SIC's financial aid office and information technology department underwent a review in 2023 with an external consultant, *CampusWorks*, to ensure compliance with R2T4 issues cited previously by auditors. Internal reorganization, including putting financial aid under the direct supervision of the comptroller, a former auditor who works in the Business Office, helped improve results. Staff at all levels of the hierarchy have appropriate credentials for their positions. As mentioned, Illinois cohort college comparisons show SIC maintains an analogous ratio of full-time staff to FTE (Full Time Equivalent) and ranks among the lowest in student-to-faculty ratio.

Recent grants since the College's last HLC visit have also provided valuable resources and support systems for students. For instance, SIC was awarded an Upward Bound grant in 2022 as a complement to its TRIO/Support Services grant. The new Upward Bound grant assists in encouraging younger audiences to persist with their education past high school. Given national and local data, this grant, along with new programs at SIC, will help to mitigate such trends. The accelerated college experience (ACE) and the CTE afternoon academy are two initiatives which promote post-secondary education as an option for students.

SIC was also awarded its third Title III grant in the past 13 years, announced in 2021. This grant focuses resources on student retention and success. External reviews suggest a positive use of grant resources. Additionally, SIC was one of only two community colleges of the 48 in the state of Illinois, along with four universities, to spearhead the Illinois Tutoring Initiative, a multi-year, multi-million dollar grant to provide tutors for 3rd through 8th-grade students in district schools to help them advance to be successful in high school and college. SIC has also been awarded a state of Illinois Bridge grant and a Pathways grant to help with resources and staffing in specific program areas. While not a grant, SIC now shares a full-time mental health counselor with Rend Lake College. This position began in the fall of 2022 and provides crucial support to students in need in a post-pandemic society.

The mission and related documents were revised by the campus community and approved by the board in the 2021-2022 academic year, and provide a realistic landscape given SIC's organization, resources, and opportunities. As evidence, SIC has long been engaged in student life, offering more teams and clubs than ever, such as e-sports most recently. An annual profit-loss report is regularly created to evaluate the cost-benefit of each team. Traditionally, basketball has always operated in the deficit, but with reorganization and a new affiliation with the USCAA, rather than NJCAA, and a more equitable distribution of scholarships among all teams, basketball is now in the positive in terms of EOY profitability. This restructuring has continued since the last commission visit. SIC's continued focus on sound accounting and exemplary fiscal policy has resulted in strong audits (FY22 and FY23).

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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.

Argument

SIC engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement and has enhanced upon its celebrated processes with its next five-year planning cycle (2023-2027). This important element of institutional effectiveness is a part of our institutional planning cycle. These elements demonstrate how the college plans, funds, assesses, and utilizes feedback for continuous improvement. Since 2019, the newly established Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) completely redesigned the planning process, including a new strategic plan and peer review process (pg. 4) to better integrate feedback from campus and district communities. More background on the new planning process can be found in Criterion 1.A.

This redesign utilizes the operational planning process as a goal-setting and shared governance catalyst. For example, in 2022, IE designed a new automated operational planning form that helps link all planned actions to the strategic plan as well as to the budget. This one form allows the user to be cognizant that the planned actions (goals) are items related to the strategic initiatives in the strategic plan and that one cannot exist without the other. Similarly, the operational planning form requires a link to budget impact. Again, this allows for the employee to be aware that all planned actions are strategic, and everything is related to budget.

Equally important, budget hearings require departments and divisions to present budgets tied to institutional priorities in an updated budget form to reflect the revised mission documents. Additionally, an analysis of SIC's budget verifies that allocations to student learning and support services are a majority of overall expenditures. All in all, budgeting and planning demonstrate a continued tradition of linking major institutional effectiveness elements. Specific examples can be found in links to assessment, planning, and budgeting.

In particular, SIC's planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups. For our most recent planning cycle, the strategic planning committee focused on research and data collection involving SWOT analyses, campus surveys, district surveys, and various data collection methods that were incorporated into the institution's strategic plan. More of this process is described in Criterion 1A. Additionally, institutional planning at SIC engages environmental factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy, and state support. Most recently, IE and Academic Services researched regional economic and employment demographic using Regional Delta Region projections when preparing for future program improvement and development. As a result, in May 2024 a marketing and outreach recruitment initiative was enacted to increase enrollment in Allied Health programs, an area the study noted needed double the number of graduates for future regional growth.

SIC closely monitors its fiscal resource base. For instance, the college continues to practice financial modeling at least five years out based on state allocations, enrollment trends, and other data sources. The institution plans based on a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.

Finally, SIC's planning and assessment practices push the institution forward to improvement. The college systematically enhances its operations and student outcomes in concrete ways. For example, SIC advanced campus operations through the addition of a full-time network technician in 2021. This new position has allowed the IT department to migrate through a backlog of staff support tickets, while also creating a better workflow system and less downtime for end-users.

Additionally, in 2023 a support request success team was formed to better understand faculty and staff requests to improve operations. In a short time, the team has identified and implemented changes to how support tickets are processed, including more frequent communication and documentation and responsiveness to purported email phishing attempts. Both examples were highly recommended by the support request success team.

In terms of student outcomes, SIC has improved learning through our Assessment process in multiple ways. Assessment outcomes have led to the following "closing the loop" adjustments:

- Biology is now including more diagram-based assignments in BIO 161.
- English instructors have developed an acronym to help students remember criteria to select better topics- SUPER (Significant, Under-discussed, Personal, Entertaining, Recent).
- Business instructors noticed students do well with applying concepts to assignments but not real-world scenarios. Instructors have added more real-world scenarios to the curriculum to increase memory absorption.

Ultimately, recent improvements in institutional research (IE/IR) have provided SIC with additional useful tools to analyze and perform deeper data dives to create more calculated strategies. As noted previously, the college purchased Tableau allowing IR to access and create data reports in real time. The most immediate and useful result of this upgrade includes the daily enrollment report, which allows IR and student services to monitor and track enrollment trends instantaneously. Also, the Tableau software allowed IR to design a data dashboard to house benchmarks and institutional data, which are both interactive and easily updated. This improvement allows IR to share data campus-wide and with various external stakeholders, and is posted on the website under the *Accountability* tab.

Another major upgrade orchestrated by IE/R (since 2019) was in data management for the college. This entailed an integration of data with actual data reports, which closes the loop for evaluating student success outcomes. For example, a Tableau report has been designed for the college's five-year program review cycle, as mandated by ICCB. This report is easily updated and allows for academic services to accurately report student success outcomes disaggregated by Pell status and/or race and ethnicity. This integration has vastly improved the college's ability to strategically perform data-driven decisions intended to enhance institutional awareness and student success. New Tableau data dashboards are being built every term. As an example, the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan is a future dashboard project and is currently under construction with an implementation date set for fall 2024. This particular dashboard will include key performance indicators from the SEM plan, allowing student services personnel to visually analyze enrollment measures from the in real-time.

In November 2023, the college contracted with *CampusWorks* to analyze and improve technology support services. Based upon recommendations, the college allocated one full-time IT staff to student services. This staffing change has helped with the communication flow between IT and student services and allowed for greater improvements to the institution's ERP and database systems. Another recommendation that has helped improve campus operations is automating systems and processes. One such example is in change management. IT staff were able to design a power app to automate technology-related inventory and replacement rotations. This one app has allowed IT to conduct active directory updates to hundreds of workstations and modernize necessary security software throughout campus. Even though third-party recommended, all actions were the result of strategic planning goals directly tied to the budget. These technology-related examples are the result of a planning process tied to student success and a quality improvement culture.

While the last HLC team initially suggested a report on institutional effectiveness, the HLC's Institutional Actions Council (IAC) overturned the on-site team's recommendation once additional evidence was allowed to be presented and a more detailed presentation was given. In less than 48 months, SIC has greatly improved its institutional effectiveness cycle and use of data/evidence. The college's full report to the IAC on this item can be found in this link.

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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.

Summary

Southeastern Illinois College continues to provide documented evidence that devotes its resources to continuous planning, program improvement, and enhancing services for students. Its structures, while stable, go through review and evolve to changing needs dictated by environmental data. Resource allocation and structural services fulfill the college mission as the institution and its leadership respond to challenges, including post-pandemic realities. Nevertheless, the college continues to grow new programs and delivery methods along with creative venues to attract students and serve the community. Planning is taken seriously by the institution, evidenced by its completely revamped comprehensive strategic planning process, including a new five-year strategic plan. Master facilities along with technology planning have also undergone great improvements with our extension center upgrades and our technological investments, that include Tableau, Canvas, and SaaS (web-based) migration to name a few. Processes for budgeting, assessment, planning, and improvement exist at the college and continue to evolve and advance.

Sources

There are no sources.