EASTERN IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
CLINTON • MUSCATINE • SCOTT



HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

ASSURANCE ARGUMENT

SEPTEMBER 2024

Welcome to the 2024 Eastern Iowa Community College District Assurance Argument.

The HLC Accreditation process allows us to analyze our strengths, challenges, and opportunities, and ensure our priorities are in harmony with our mission. These materials reflect the collective work of a team of over 60 faculty, staff, and college leaders who took part in gathering, analyzing, and discussing the work we do every day.

Our district spans seven counties and was created in 1966. Through legislation, the state of Iowa established 15 community college districts, and EICC became the umbrella institution for three already existing community colleges: Clinton (CCC), Muscatine (MCC), and Scott (SCC), each with its own campus.

EICC's mission is to "deliver high-quality education and training that prepares a skilled workforce, provides equitable access to higher education, and builds and strengthens our communities." To best fulfill its mission, the college balances consistency in policies, program alignment, and oversight with a strong respect for the individual needs of each community. This enables EICC and each campus to provide effective services, efficient operations, and impactful opportunities for students and the region.

As a public, comprehensive community college, EICC awards certificates, diplomas, and Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degrees in more than 70 career and technical education (CTE) programs, and Associate in Arts (AA) or Associate in Science (AA) degrees in approximately 50 transfer concentrations.

We are proud to be an open admissions institution and serve more than 12,000 students annually through credit and 14,000 through non-credit programs. EICC offers online and in-person courses across multiple campuses and 14 centers, three of which were recently constructed to expand CTE programming.

To ensure students are well-prepared for further education and successful careers, the college established robust processes for evaluating and improving teaching and learning. These processes focus on key areas such as program review, assessment of student learning, and specialized accreditation, and promote continuous improvement.

We also reach beyond academics to ensure our students have every resource to succeed. EICC provides a wide range of student wrap-around services, including disability services, mental health resources, food pantries, and academic supports.

To support economic growth within the communities we serve, EICC invites regional businesses to join CTE program advisory boards, review curriculum, and share workforce challenges and needs. Such collaboration has informed our expansion of credit and non-credit programs. Since our last HLC Accreditation review, the college has launched new CTE and transfer degrees to address workforce demand and align with the academic and career goals of our students.

Our physical growth is tied in many ways to our K-12 partnerships, which continue to expand. EICC provides concurrent enrollment in 24 schools across the district. In addition, our 13 Career Academies provide high school students with a clear pathway and focused education. Since the last HLC multiple site visit, we placed a dedicated EICC advisor in each high school to guide students as they identify, then work to achieve their goals. In FY2024, high school students accounted for 42.3% of our total enrollment. Many earn college credits and credentials before they graduate.

EICC is not a static institution and we will continually evolve to be present, and operate, in the ways our students and communities need. We are fortunate that state funding remains stable, and the region

strongly supports the college and its programs. Over the next decade, EICC will face many challenges; the impending enrollment cliff is just one. But we are committed to fulfilling our role as THE Community's College. EICC will continue to collaborate with students, K-12 partners, and stakeholders to meet career, workforce, and skilled training needs. We will continue to play a vital role in workforce development and economic development within the communities we serve. We will continue to allocate resources in a manner that wholly supports our educational Mission, expands academic and CTE programs, and improves facilities. And we will work to achieve the strategic priorities set by the EICC Board of Trustees.

EICC proudly submits this Assurance Argument, complete with supporting evidence, reflecting continued fulfillment of accreditation criteria. We are committed to reflection and improvement, and eagerly await feedback and ideas from the review team. Thank you for your time.

With appreciation,

Liang Chee Wee, Ph.D
EICC Interim Chancellor

Assurance Argument

Eastern Iowa Community College District

Review date: 10/7/2024

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

1.A.1.

The Mission of Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) declares a commitment to the educational, economic, and societal advancement of the Eastern Iowa region. Reflecting the broad spectrum of its offerings and responsibilities, the Mission pledges to: "Deliver high-quality education and training that prepares a skilled workforce, provides equitable access to higher education, and builds and strengthens our communities." This Mission, revised in 2021 as part of the Strategic Planning process, emerged from inclusive and thoughtful discussions with an engaged, diverse group of stakeholders, ensuring a wide array of perspectives and needs were considered. The culmination of this collaboration is a Mission statement that aligns with EICC's goals and resonates with the communities it serves. The final approval by the Board set a shared vision for the college's future and commitment to excellence and inclusivity.

EICC's Mission surpasses the directives of Iowa Code 260C.1. The code mandates a comprehensive range of educational opportunities and services**,** including the first two years of college transfer work**,** career and technical training**,** worker retraining, adult high school completion, college courses for high school students, and more. The college goes beyond with a Mission that reflects the aspirational and community-focused ethos outlined in Board Policy 101: Statement of Guiding Principles, and Board Policy 102: Educational Philosophy. Both emphasize the importance of a well-educated citizenry in addressing societal and global challenges, highlighting the college's commitment to providing comprehensive, diversified, and

quality education. This focus on community impact underscores EICC's resolve to empower individuals to achieve their full potential.

The Mission is one of four pillars that define EICC's identity and direction. Its Vision, Core Values, and Professional Standards guide the institution's strategies, decisions, and actions. Mission critical components were developed through an inclusive process that involved committees, stakeholder feedback sessions, and Board approval. This participatory approach ensured the college's foundational statements are rooted in the collective wisdom and insights of the entire EICC community.

Together, the Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Professional Standards provide a robust framework guiding EICC's strategic direction and reinforcing its commitment to provide an inclusive, supportive, and high-quality educational environment. These guiding principles shape the policies, programs, and initiatives of the college, ensuring EICC is responsive to the evolving needs of its students and the communities it serves, and fulfills its role as a pivotal educational institution in Eastern Iowa.

1.A.2

EICC's commitment to educational excellence and community enrichment includes a broad spectrum of academic and professional development programs. These include associate degrees, diplomas, short term training and certificates across varied disciplines. EICC integrates theoretical knowledge with practical applications, notably through Career and Technological Education (CTE) programs that emphasize hands-on, clinical, and lab experiences. This approach ensures students are equipped with the necessary skills for immediate workforce entry and are job-ready.

EICC's Mission statement was updated in 2021 as a core element of the strategic planning process. The college aims to change lives and build communities through education. Supported by a clear Vision**,** the college is advancing student education and enhancing community well-being. The Core Values and Professional Standards—academic integrity, creativity, community engagement, and service excellence—are manifest across all college activities, including curriculum innovation and community service projects.

EICC provides accessible educational pathways for all, including foundational programs like Adult Basic Education, High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) preparation, and English Language Acquisition (ELA) instruction. These initiatives ensure education is accessible to everyone, reflecting EICC's commitment to societal growth and individual transformation.

Creativity and cultural engagement are central to EICC's identity, as demonstrated by campus art galleries and a variety of cultural activities**.** From visual arts to performances and events celebrating diversity, like Juneteenth and international food days, foster creative expression and cultural exchange. EICC's tagline, "The Community's College," underscores its dedication to community service and engagement, with advisory committees and sector boards ensuring alignment with regional needs and interests.

EICC extends its support to include services addressing student well-being and success. This includes on-site food pantries, clothing closets, Sharing Shelves**,** mental health services**,** and transportation assistance, highlighting EICC's holistic educational approach.

Furthermore, EICC contributes to regional economic development and workforce readiness through customized training programs and active participation in Iowa's 260E and 260F Job Training. In fiscal year 2024, the 260E program had a regional economic training impact of $1.4 million and the 260F program generated over $500,000.

EICC is dedicated to transforming lives, enriching communities, and fostering economic growth through education. This comprehensive approach to student support, community service, and workforce development establishes the college as a vital asset to Eastern Iowa and embodies its Mission to educate and empower individuals and communities.

1.A.3

EICC's Mission, grounded in Iowa Code 260C.1, clearly delineates its dedication to offering accessible, high-quality education and services tailored to meet the diverse needs of students, businesses, and the region. This legal foundation, in conjunction with Board Policy 101: Statement of Guiding Principles, and Board Policy 102: Educational Philosophy, sets the framework for the institution's objectives and audience. These guiding documents articulate the nature, scope, and beneficiaries of its higher education offerings and services.

EICC fosters student success, engages with the community, and promotes lifelong learning. This approach supports academic and personal development, enhances community engagement, and fits its Mission as specified by legislative and policy frameworks.

The Core Values and Professional Standards under which EICC operates display commitment to integrity, respect, excellence, and inclusivity. These principles and EICC's Vision ensure all students and community members receive a quality and equitable education. By operating within the bounds of its Mission, and under the guidance of Iowa Code 260C.1, Board Policy 101 and 102, EICC champions academic and personal growth while fostering respect and fairness.

1.A.4

EICC's array of academic programs, student support services, and diversity mirrors its foundational Mission, Values, and Strategic Plan goals. The college tailors educational and support services to the needs of students and demands of the regional job market**.** Through collaboration, including input from advisory committees and the development of the statewide Transfer Majors' program, EICC aligns its curriculum with the needs of higher education institutions and industry partners, promoting student success and benefiting the broader community. The following reflect EICC's commitment to its Mission:

Academic Offerings:

- Collaboration with advisory committees and industry partners to create responsive workforce training and career programs.

- Clear degree pathways that streamline the journey to degree completion, career progression, and further education. Early college opportunities through high school concurrent enrollment courses and Career Academies, supported by thorough advising and oversight.

- Transfer majors offering explicit paths to state universities and private colleges.

- Short-term training opportunities provided by EICC Continuing Education proactively address evolving workforce needs and support career and skill development

- Adult Basic Education (ABE), High School Equivalency (HSE), and ELA programs support learners in foundational educational stages.

Student Support Services:

- Services including mental health support, tutoring, disability services, financial aid, library access, veterans' assistance, ACCESS, and TRIO Student Support Services.

- Career counseling to inform decision-making and facilitate successful job placement.

- Holistic advising model with regular meetings and communication between students and academic advisors.

- Tools like Dropout Detective, Signal Vine and Student Planning Module for early intervention and continued support.

- Additional support services such as **fo**od pantries, clothing closets, and transportation assistance.

Enrollment Profile:

- In FY2024, 11,186 students enrolled in EICC credit courses and 13,000 in non-credit programs.

- FY2024 enrollment data highlights significant diversity and participation in CTE programs, online learning, and a noteworthy proportion of first-generation students. EICC provides equitable opportunities.

EICC's aligns its academic programs, support services, and enrollment profile to its Mission, highlighting its commitment to student success and addressing community needs.

1.A.5.

EICC ensures its Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Professional Standards are easily accessible and highly visible within the college and to visitors. The principles are further amplified through digital signage, computer lock screens, framed statements, and printed cards, reinforcing their importance to everyone associated with the college.

The Mission is also embedded into EICC's scholarship, higher education programs, and operations. It is a focal point during the annual District Fall Development Day and integrated into public documents such as the Strategic Plan, the Board policy manual, and employment position descriptions. Importantly, the Mission tops the Board agenda**,** highlighting its central role in strategic planning, decision-making, and operations across the college.

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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

1.B.1.

The Mission of Eastern Iowa Community College District (EICC) is reflected in its brand: "THE Community's College". This identity encompasses the services it provides to the region as an open admission, multi-location, multi-delivery, educational provider, and community resource and partner. Guided by Board policies and administrative procedures, every decision and action demonstrates its obligation to the public good, commitment to the success of all students, and development of a regional workforce.

EICC's Board policies are a framework for implementing operational processes and adherence to the college's Mission, Vision, Values, and the responsibilities outlined in Iowa Code 260.C.

Board Policy 102 defines seven guiding principles that reflect the Board's core beliefs and EICC's educational services. EICC is committed to providing a flexible educational environment to meet diverse student needs, as detailed in the following policies:

- 612: College Transfer Program
- 613: Career and Technical Education
- 614: Continuing Education
- 615: Adult Education
- 616: Developmental (Basic) Education
- 619: Concurrent Enrollment
- 620: Delivery

The Administrative Procedures Manual outlines operational procedures for compliance and consistency.

The college has operated as a comprehensive community college since it was established in 1965. EICC's higher education offerings include credit and noncredit programs, transfer and Career and Technical Education (CTE) options, developmental education, online courses, and concurrent programming.

It pairs its high-quality education and training programs with wraparound services to make education accessible to all students, focusing on affordability, resources, and addressing potential barriers to success. At the same time, EICC provides workforce development resources, helping businesses identify state funding opportunities for employee training, creating customized training programs, and providing apprentices with the classroom education they need.

Serving the public good means EICC meets students and community members where they are and provides educational opportunities that enhance lives. As an open-enrollment college, it welcomes all people to register for post-secondary classes, regardless of disability, educational background, or socioeconomic status. EICC serves community members who want to explore an academic interest, advance in a career field, develop English language skills, continue their education, obtain a high school equivalency diploma, take concurrent classes, train their workforce, and more.

EICC serves students through various programs and resources. For instance, 5% of EICC students report having a disability. To ensure all students have equitable access to college programs, all three campuses have a Disability Services office. Current and prospective students can find comprehensive information on services and academic accommodations on the newly updated Disability Services webpage. The resource page is organized to guide students to the information they need: accommodations, accommodations for high school students, housing accommodations, and service and emotional support animals. It also includes EICC's Mission statement, policy for serving students with disabilities, a FAQ section, and Disability Services mission statement.

When students overcome potential barriers to success, it advances the entire community. To that end, EICC provides robust student resources including loaner laptops and computer labs, Wi-Fi hot spots, campus-based food pantries, life skills workshops, and mental health services.

EICC also provides supplemental tutoring through Success Centers. In each, the tutoring coordinator and staff, which includes peer tutors, retired professors, and others who excel in a field of specialty, help students in any subject, ranging from drafting essays to solving math problems. The centers provide face-to-face, Zoom appointments, and writing consultations via email. Students can also access free online tutoring services through BrainFuse.

EICC's three campus foundations support initiatives that enhance the educational experience for students and benefit the region. In the 2023-24 academic year, The Paul B. Sharar Foundation for Clinton Community College, Muscatine Community College Foundation, and Scott Community College Foundation collectively awarded $711,605 in scholarships to 430 students.

The three foundations also partner to:

- Support an annual Welding Competition organized by EICC and the local chapter of the American Welding Society, where students can win scholarships and equipment.
- Offer a free three-credit hour course to each High School Equivalency graduate many of which have completed a course.
- Address the local teacher shortage by establishing funding for Substitute Teaching Authorization.

In addition:

The Sharar Foundation awards aid for textbooks, fees, and emergency expenses. It backs the RISE program for student retention and engagement, contributes to college programs, equipment upgrades, and further education for employees. The Sharar Foundation will complete a $4.5 Million campaign to enhance the Bickelhaupt Arboretum as a living classroom and a community center.

The MCC Foundation's part-time Executive Director and a volunteer board forge strategic partnerships and carefully manage resources to eliminate financial barriers for students and enhance educational infrastructure. It partnered with the Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine to streamline the scholarship process, contributes to capital projects, like the Columbus Junction Center**,** using Alpha Braunworth funds for construction and equipment. It also awards funding for faculty development, emergencies, and community events.

The SCC Foundation and its donors support initiatives to reduce barriers for students, including free transportation services, assistance with textbook purchases and testing fees, technology support for those lacking necessary resources, and emergency housing funds so students have a safe place to stay. The foundation's contributions also help the college undertake special projects to enhance educational experiences. Projects funded include the educational Outdoor Kitchen for the Culinary Department in 2021, practice and game day field rentals for the soccer teams, and essential equipment for health programs, such as an ambulance in 2024.

1.B.2.

As a public, comprehensive community college, EICC adheres to the guidelines set forth by the Community College Act, Iowa Code 260.1C**.** The college serves the educational needs of the region and does not generate any financial returns for investors, related parent organizations, or external interests. EICC's Mission and Vision statements, as well as Board Policy 101: Statement of Guiding Principles**,** Board Policy 102: Educational Philosophy, and Iowa Code 260.1C, define its primary purpose.

EICC's educational responsibilities guide its actions and allocation of resources, as illustrated by the:

- Strategic Plan which fully aligns with EICC's educational responsibilities. Among the pillars within the plan, "Student Success" is achieved, in part, through substantial investments in Career Academies and Career Advancement Centers. These initiatives and projects support student access, completion, transfer, and job attainment.

- FY2024 Budget allocates $48,257,461 million to general fund expenditures and sustains the college's core educational functions. The college has dedicated 74.8% of the total budget to fulfilling its primary educational mission.

- 2021 Bond Levy, a $40 million measure, allowed the college to expand CTE programs and serve more high school students and adults. More than 70% of voters supported the measure. EICC used the funds to construct the Clinton, DeWitt, and Muscatine Career Advancement Centers, and to reconstruct space and open a Health Sciences Center at Scott Community College. Workforce development was a primary focus of the bond projects.

EICC's educational responsibilities align with Iowa Code 260.1C. It serves the community and provides opportunities for student success. EICC's Mission takes precedence over financial returns, and it is committed to education and training in the region.

1.B.3.

EICC engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs in alignment with its Mission and capacity. The college has forged many collaborative partnerships and initiatives that benefit students, the community, and the broader region.

EICC works closely with local organizations and agencies also dedicated to supporting students and the economic and social well-being of its communities. These partnerships extend across sectors, including education, business, and social services. Here are some examples:

College Connections High School Concurrent Program:

EICC works in partnership with 24 area high schools to offer concurrent classes, enabling students to start their college and career education. EICC deploys Concurrent Advisors across the 24 area high schools to support students through advising, college planning, and course registration. Concurrent Advisors are an in-building resource for all post-secondary-seeking high school students. EICC worked with the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) and area high schools to provide school districts with College & Career Transition Coaches (CCTC). They help students develop academic, college, and career goals. In AY2023-2024, EICC had eight CCTC positions serving 14 high schools who provided students with post-secondary transition support, college, career visits, and improving Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rates.

Transfer Agreements:

EICC has transfer agreements and joint enrollment programs with Iowa's public universities and other colleges and universities across the region. These agreements ensure a smooth transition from EICC to the four-year institution. In 2019, EICC was one of 15 Iowa community colleges that partnered with the state universities to develop Transfer Majors. Then, EICC spearheaded the expansion of Transfer Majors to private colleges and universities. Eleven private institutions elected to participate, expanding higher education opportunities and options across the state.

Collaboration with Other Community Colleges:

EICC collaborates with other community colleges to expand programs and provide in-district tuition rates, making education and career training more accessible and affordable for students. Through a partnership with Illinois-based Carl Sandburg College, EICC students can earn an AAS (Associate of Applied Science) in Dental Hygiene.

Consortia Relationships:

EICC's membership in the Iowa Community College Online Consortium (ICCOC) gives its students more choice and access to online programs. Established in 1999 to address the demand for online and flexible delivery, oversight and quality, members develop and provide courses. In AY2024, EICC students took 369 online courses, and EICC offered 170 courses to students at member colleges.

RiverShare Library Consortium:

Through the RiverShare Library consortium, EICC students and the community can access a broader range of resources. It is a collaboration that maximizes the use of public funds for the benefit of all.

Engagement with Local Businesses:

EICC partners with regional businesses for clinical, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities, fostering workforce development and job creation in the region. Local businesses, chambers, and economic development groups were actively engaged in developing the Career Advancement Centers and assisted with curriculum development. The DeWitt Chamber and Economic Development Authority were instrumental in identifying a location for the new DeWitt Career Advancement Center and the selection of the programs offered there.

Advisory Committees:

The college maintains Career and Technical Advisory Committees made up of representatives from regional businesses and industry. These committees provide valuable input on curriculum, industry trends, and workforce needs, ensuring program relevance.

Regional Planning Partnerships:

EICC faculty and academic leaders are active and contributing members of Area 9 Regional Planning Partnerships (RPPs)**.** These were established to ensure the school district could provide CTE programs cost-effectively. RPPs make sure students have continuous and dependable access to high-quality CTE programs. EICC faculty provide feedback and assist in CTE curriculum development at the K-12 level. This provides students with a smooth transition to Career Academies, concurrent enrollment access, and post-secondary education pathways.

Collaboration with State Agencies:

EICC contributes to the region's economic stability by working with IowaWORKS to support dislocated individuals and downsizing companies. The college also works with the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) in the implementation and planning of concurrent programming, HSE offerings, and Transfer Majors.

External Funding Relationships:

External funding relationships allow EICC to enhance services and opportunities for students and the community. For example, the college realized many students needed affordable transportation options. The SCC Foundation sought funding from the Quinn Family to provide free bus transportation for students. The MCC Foundation matches funding from the Stanley Center to provide scholarships to Child Development Associate students and to assist in addressing childcare shortages in the community.

EICC partners with community social agencies to provide economic and mental health support systems, addressing critical community needs. The college also participates in Rapid Response teams, which provide laid-off workers with information on community resources, educational offerings, and workforce opportunities.

Program Accreditation:

The college maintains 13 program accreditations that guide curriculum and ensure programs meet industry standards. EICC's Nursing program underwent a review by the Iowa Board of Nursing in 2023 and was awarded approval. The Board reviewed the curriculum, equipment, and faculty to ensure quality.

State Accreditation:

EICC aligns with Iowa's educational objectives and quality benchmarks and maintains state accreditation. The designation requires the college to provide high-quality curriculum and faculty, regular evaluation, review of CTE programs, and rigorous strategic and facility planning to ensure EICC's infrastructure and institutional strategies are mission-driven and serve the community. State accreditation recognizes the college is committed to educational excellence and responsive to the needs of all stakeholders, including students, faculty, and the broader region.

The state's Educational Equity Review focuses on inclusivity and accessibility. It ensures EICC is addressing the needs of students and complying with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

NACEP Accreditation:

EICC's College Connections program holds National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation, which is a hallmark of excellence. The rigorous national standards for concurrent enrollment partnerships assure stakeholders that EICC is committed to quality education. Accreditation involves a comprehensive peer review and adherence to best practices in providing college courses to high school students.

Community Engagement:

EICC's commitment to the community is reinforced by its students and employees, who contribute to the region through United Way, student club events, food pantry initiatives, and membership on regional boards and committees. EICC's chancellor, vice chancellors, three presidents, and deans also participate in several community organizations, solidifying the college's presence and engagement.

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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

1.C.1.

EICC prepares students for informed citizenship and workplace success, as outlined in its 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. Its work is multifaceted and meets the diverse needs of students. Here are some examples:

Post-secondary Credential Attainment:

Through comprehensive retention plans, clear guided pathways**,** services that address barriers to success, and student engagement, the number of EICC students earning post-secondary credentials is increasing. From cohort year 2009 to 2019, EICC increased the IPEDS 150% graduation rate from 22.8% to 39.2%.

Work-Based Learning Experiences:

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs include lab, clinical, internship, and practicum experiences. Students apply their education in real-world settings and experience the work environment of a potential employer.

Career Services and Support:

All students have access to services focused on career awareness, exploration, and preparation. This includes interest inventories, career counseling, informational interviews, resume building, interview preparation, and career competencies. These resources support professional goals and success.

Continuing Education:

Students and professionals remain competitive and proficient in their fields through ongoing learning opportunities. The Continuing Education division provides short-term training credentials, career development, and personal enrichment courses, catering to a range of community members.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Councils:

To ensure continuous improvement, business and industry partners are invited to participate in their respective CTE program advisory council. They work with faculty and administrators to ensure the program aligns with current workforce skills, and review curriculum, equipment, and training spaces.

Business and Industry Partnerships:

EICC collaborates with companies to create and deliver customized training and micro-credentials that align with their workforce needs, fostering a symbiotic relationship between education and industry. The college is the regional administrator of the Iowa 260E and 260F tax incentive programs and works with businesses seeking financial training assistance.

Academic Guided Pathways:

In a variety of fields, students align their education with career aspirations. High school students earn college credit in concurrent classes or through Career Academies. EICC supports students in whatever path they choose—whether continuing their education or transitioning into the workforce.

Diversity Rich Courses:

The designation of Diversity Rich Course highlights EICC's commitment to cultural understanding and inclusivity, which is fundamental for informed citizenship in a multicultural society. The following courses hold the designation:

- HUM 110 Changes and Choices
- HUM 105 Working in America
- HUM 183 Living with Space, Time and Technology
- SDV 114 Strategies for Academic Success
- LIT 130 African American Literature
- LIT 140 British Literature
- SOC 110 Intro to Sociology

- SOC 115 Social Problems
- PSY 111 Intro to Psychology
- PSY 213 Industrial and Organizational Psychology
- PSY 251 Social Psychology
- ART 101 Art Appreciation
- HIS 117 Ancient and Medieval History
- HIS 118 Early Modern History
- HIS 119 The Modern Period
- HIS 151 US History to 1877
- HIS 152 US History since 1877
- GLS 100 Contemporary World Issues
- PHI 101 Intro to Philosophy
- PHI 105 Intro to Ethics
- PHI 110 Intro to Logic
- REL 101 Survey of World Religions

Citizenship Preparation:

Recent immigrants prepare to become U.S. citizens while also engaging in English Language Acquisition (ELA), High School Equivalency Testing (HSE), or other career training. These classes prepare students for the workforce and active and informed participation in society.

Inclusive and Equitable Treatment:

Through ELA and English as a Second Language (ESL) credit classes**,** and multilingual materials, language barriers do not impede student participation. EICC is committed to equity and inclusivity.

EICC promotes cultural awareness, offers implicit bias training, and provides diversity-focused professional development to ensure diverse student backgrounds are respected and understood.

Cultural Experiences:

EICC offers diverse cultural experiences through student activities and events including play productions, world culture days, fine art exhibits, trips to museums and community events, and study abroad. The "Voices of Diversity" project, along with flags representing student nationalities, celebrates the college's diversity and global connectedness.

Civic Engagement in Elections and Representative Government:

Students can register to vote and participate in elected officials' forums. EICC takes students to Community College Day on The Hill and to Washington D.C**.** to discuss issues that impact their education and training with state and federal legislators.

Community Service:

Student organizations are involved in community service activities, such as blood drives, supporting a complimentary dental clinic, and organizing autumn family events**.** Through such activities, students gain insight into local needs, refine professional abilities, learn teamwork, and build communication skills.

EICC's comprehensive approach to education, which combines academic, social, and practical elements, is well-aligned with the needs of students and the community.

1.C.2.

EICC's commitment to fostering inclusivity and equity for diverse populations is embedded within its operations and initiatives. Here are some examples:

Professional Development Opportunities:

EICC provides professional development throughout the year for faculty and staff, including faculty start-up days, fall development day, etc. These sessions focus on enhancing skills and knowledge in various areas, including mental health, poverty simulation, inclusive environments, pronoun usage, and implicit bias. This training empowers faculty and staff to create and to promote, a respectful and inclusive atmosphere for all students.

Diversity Council:

Faculty and staff meet monthly to design, plan, and organize events and initiatives that celebrate diversity on each campus. Workshops, guest speakers, and displays promote understanding and awareness. The council coordinates a Diversity Academy (DA), which was launched in 2015. Participants learn about current issues in higher education through a series of speakers, presentations, and activities. They are asked to self-reflect, and participate in group work and a culminating project, then share their learning outcomes with other participants. Capstone projects have led to meaningful change, like redesigning student service areas to accommodate persons using wheelchairs, simplifying the financial aid forms and processes for limited English language learners, diaper drives for student parents, and creating privacy rooms for mothers, people taking medications, or anyone needing a quiet place.

Student Engagement:

EICC strives to increase enrollment and retention of students from diverse ethnic backgrounds and underserved populations. The college supports student clubs and activities that engage and foster a sense of belonging and celebrate diversity, including All Kinds of People**,** Black Student Union, and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). The college also supports and promotes events such as Juneteenth, cultural food days, Black History Month, and college planning events in Spanish.

Mandatory Training and Awareness:

To foster a climate of respect, faculty and staff complete mandatory training on Title IX/Sexual Violence and Prevention, Americans with Disabilities Act Overview, Diversity and Inclusion, Discrimination Awareness, Alcohol and Other Drugs, and Iowa's First Amendment**.**

Basic Needs Support:

Many students face food insecurity, as highlighted in the 2020 Hope Survey**.** The college collaborates with local agencies to provide and expand access to on-campus food pantries**,** and clothing closets provide clothing, basic school supplies, and other items necessary to meet basic needs. Transportation aid helps students get to their classes and utilize services.

Mental Health Services:

EICC has expanded mental health services for students through a multi-tiered approach. This includes a contracted, on-site mental health provider, and a full-time licensed Mental Health Counselor as of Summer 2023. Through trauma-informed care training**,** employees can also provide support and increase awareness.

Disability Services:

EICC's disability services provide students with opportunities to receive accommodation to ensure an inclusive and equitable educational experience. Each campus has a Disability Service Provider (DSP) who works one-on-one with students to set up accommodations based on their disability. Accommodation removes barriers to educational access and creates a level playing field for students. Examples are extended test time, read-aloud technology for tests, digital books, sign language interpreters, note-taking, adaptive furniture, and more. EICC's website provides step-by-step information and forms for students who want to apply for accommodations.

Assistive Technology:

EICC provides assistive technology that caters to student needs. Products such as Read&Write and ReadSpeaker/TextAid are built within Canvas and can read digital content aloud. Students can also upload documents or digital textbooks and use an extension to read online content aloud from anywhere on the Internet. Screen masking tools, enlarged text, and

other options can enhance online reading. On the internal side of Canvas, an accessibility checker scans files and documents and lets instructors know if their materials are accessible. If not, Canvas outlines and recommends changes to improve accessibility.

Class lectures are accessible to students with disabilities through Glean, an online recording and notetaking tool for computers and mobile devices. Students can replay lectures, upload files, receive lecture transcripts, and create quizzes based on their notes.

ACCESS:

This partnership between EICC and local K-12 schools facilitates the transition of high school students with disabilities to college. The program promotes inclusion and equity by providing support to students who may have obstacles to entering higher education. The ACCESS Program Coordinator guides students through college, meeting with them weekly and helping them navigate higher education.

EICC's commitment to inclusivity and equity is reflected in its professional development, Diversity Council, student engagement initiatives, comprehensive training, support of basic needs, expanded mental health services, and robust disability services. Collectively, these efforts create a respectful and inclusive environment for a diverse student population.

1. C. 3.

EICC cultivates a culture of respect, appreciation, and value for everyone within its community. Its commitment is embedded in the institution's policies, Core Values, Professional Standards, Strategic Plan, professional development initiatives, events and activities, and support programs for students facing socio-economic challenges.

Policies:

EICC's commitment to inclusivity and respect is reflected in its policies, including non-discrimination statements within Board Policy 501 and 401, Board Policy 427: Academic Freedom, and a robust student code of conduct. These documents are accessible through various college publications.

The non-discrimination statement aligns with federal and state standards and is widely disseminated. It prominently appears in student recruitment materials and human resources hiring **documents**. Members of the EICC community, whether prospective students or potential employees, are aware of its commitment to an environment free from discrimination.

Core Values:

EICC's five Core Values guide its actions and decisions. These values were created through a collaborative process involving faculty and staff, and stakeholder input in 2018. The values were officially approved by the EICC Board of Trustees and reiterate the institution's commitment to fostering an inclusive culture.

In fulfilling its core value of "Belonging," EICC is creating an environment where each person feels safe and welcome, with equal opportunities to thrive and flourish. Programs such as Path Forward Debt Forgiveness allow former students, who owe the college money, to return to the classroom and try again. The Gray Matters Collective provides students with the opportunity and support to discuss mental health and illness with their peers. Similarly, "Social Justice" is a value in action; EICC serves its communities by providing accessible and inclusive campuses, and equitable resources and opportunities for all.

Professional Standards:

EICC's Professional Standards outline clear expectations for employees and acknowledge the work of creating an inclusive college culture is both ongoing and aspirational. All employees commit to embrace and support diversity, inclusion, and equity in all practices. The standards place a strong emphasis on open, honest, and respectful communication; welcoming and valuing different perspectives and opinions; and treating others with dignity, empathy, care, and kindness. EICC's Professional Standards are distributed annually to all employees as a reminder of the commitment they have made to students and the broader community.

Professional Development and Training:

EICC encourages faculty and staff to engage in diversity, equity, and inclusion training. These programs empower employees with tools and knowledge to foster an inclusive environment.

Training programs include Safe Zone, Mental Health Awareness, Poverty Simulation, and Implicit Bias. Throughout the academic year, EICC offers faculty and staff optional diversity training workshops, concurrent sessions, and online modules for personal and professional growth. These programs spark insight and discussions about race, generational differences, racism, bias, and identity. These conversations lead to mutual respect and understanding.

Events and Activities:

EICC celebrates diverse backgrounds and ideas within its community. It supports a variety of events and activities, both on campus and in the region, that champion diversity and inclusion including commemorations of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**,** Juneteenth celebrations**,** and active student organizations like LULAC, which highlights Latinx culture and leadership.

EICC supports the Quad Cities Hispanic Chamber Leadership series and participates in Mental Health awareness initiatives including the NAMI Family to Family program, and NAMI Family and Friends Seminar. These events and activities foster understanding, appreciation, and respect for the cultures, ethnicities, backgrounds, and lived experiences that create the EICC community.

Support for First-Generation Students:

EICC recognizes first-generation and low-income students can face unique challenges and has services and programs in place to assist. TRIO Student Support Services provide students with

high-touch advising, tutoring, and transfer planning. Additionally, EICC leverages GEAR UP Grants to assist minority, low-income, and first-generation students in their post-secondary transition.

Programs like GEAR UP provide valuable resources, including free student success courses and math boot camps, helping students navigate the initial weeks of college. EICC supports area K-12 schools through GEAR UP grant activities, and by facilitating campus tours, conducting financial aid workshops, offering career exploration, and organizing activities that encourage and prepare students for college.

Addressing Socio-Economic Issues:

EICC addresses socio-economic issues faced by students. It offers scholarships, financial aid, transportation assistance, and emergency funds to support students in need. In addition, each EICC campus and center has a student food pantry and/or a clothing closet.

Creating a culture of respect, appreciation, and value for everyone is not a slogan; it is a lived reality. EICC's policies, core values, professional standards, strategic plan, professional development, events and activities, and support programs for students speak to its dedication to inclusivity and mutual respect. The college actively works to make the community a better place for all.

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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

1.S Summary

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and community engagement in higher education. The institution’s Mission statement pledges to deliver high-quality education and training to prepare a skilled workforce, provide equitable access to higher education, and strengthen communities. This Mission was developed through thoughtful discussions with a diverse group of stakeholders, ensuring a wide array of perspectives and needs were considered. This inclusive approach ensures EICC's Mission aligns with its goals and resonates deeply with the communities it serves. It sets a shared vision for the college's future and commitment to excellence and inclusivity.

EICC’s Mission is operationalized through extensive engagement with external constituencies and strategic partnerships. The college actively seeks stakeholder feedback, anticipates societal impacts, consults community experts, and participates in relevant conferences and meetings. These collaborations are integral to the college’s strategy and benefit students and the wider community. EICC partners with local businesses for clinical, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities; collaborates with high schools for concurrent enrollment programs; and participates in regional planning partnerships to ensure high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. These efforts demonstrate the college is responsive to the evolving needs of its students and the communities it serves.

EICC's commitment to inclusivity and equity is evident in its comprehensive approach to education. The college supports a diverse student population through professional development, a proactive Diversity Council, student engagement initiatives, expanded mental health services, and robust disability services. These initiatives create a respectful and inclusive environment where all students can thrive. By integrating these principles into every aspect of its operations, EICC fulfills its educational responsibilities and significantly contributes to the well-being and economic vitality of the region, reaffirming it is a pivotal educational institution in Eastern Iowa.

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

2.A.1.

The development of EICC's Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Professional Standards was a comprehensive process involving extensive input from a wide range of stakeholders, including students, faculty, and staff. The Board of Trustees approved the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, along with the Mission and Vision statements, during the November 2021 meeting. Recognizing the importance of these guiding principles, the college sought and received Board approval to extend the Strategic Plan's timeline to 2025, ensuring continued alignment with the institution's goals. This decision reflects its commitment to periodically revisit and reaffirm the college's direction. The Board ensures the Mission is at the forefront of its governance and strategic planning, incorporating the core principles in its monthly meetings and ongoing revision of its policies and Strategic Plan.

The Board is committed to effective and appropriate governance. Board Policy 221 allows the chancellor to lead and manage the day-to-day in the organization. The Board's role is to advise and evaluate the CEO; discuss, review, and approve strategic directions; and ensure the organization is Mission-focused and operates responsibly and effectively. The policy, along with Board Policy 224: Conflict of Interest sets the tone for all stakeholders that the institution will adhere to the highest ethical standards.

EICC provides its students, administrators, faculty and staff with policies and procedures informing them of their rights and responsibilities within the institution. Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are available on the EICC website. Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are reviewed every three years.

2.A.2.

EICC operates with integrity across all functions: financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary services. Systematic policies, practices, and reviews ensure accountability, transparency, and ethical conduct at every level of the institution.

Financial Integrity

EICC maintains the highest standards of financial integrity, demonstrated through detailed financial reporting**,** rigorous auditing**,** and conscientious fiscal management. At each Board meeting, the vice chancellor for administrative services presents a comprehensive financial report**,** including a comparative analysis of budgeted and actual revenues, and expenditures for the general fund. These statements are subject to an annual independent audit**.** Audit results are publicly reviewed during a board meeting, providing financial transparency and accountability.

The institution's fiscal management is further supported by policies, including Investment Policy 720 and Internal Budget Control Policies 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708**.** These govern stewardship of funds and Administrative Procedures Section D: Business and Operational outline budgeting and purchasing procedures, ensuring financial transactions meet high ethical standards. EICC's financial health, stability, and integrity is underscored by consistently positive Moody's Aa1 Bond ratings.

Academic Integrity

Curriculum development and review align educational programs with the highest standards of quality and relevance, ensuring EICC students receive an education that is meaningful and applicable. The college provides transparent communication about transfer agreements and the Liaison Advisory Committee on Transfer Students (LACTS) agreement, giving students essential guidance. Additionally, EICC's Career and Technical Education (CTE) program review process aligns career programs with current industry standards, ensuring graduates are well-prepared for their future careers.

Compliance

EICC fully complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**,** safeguarding student privacy and rights. College faculty and staff are educated on their responsibility to maintain student privacy and rights during the comprehensive new faculty orientation and mandatory training for all employees. This ensures EICC's workforce upholds integrity in their interactions with students. The Student Handbook details policies on critical issues such as academic dishonesty, sexual misconduct, FERPA, and student complaints. This provides students with clear information on their rights and the standards of conduct expected from them.

Human Resources Integrity

EICC employs rigorous and transparent hiring practices that are equitable, foster a diverse and inclusive workplace, and uphold high professional standards. The adoption of People Admin, an online application system, ensures EICC efficiently manages recruitment and adheres to Equal

Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines**.** The platform facilitates a collaborative, inclusive, and impartial hiring process. Candidates are assessed solely on their qualifications, without bias toward protected demographic information.

EICC fosters continuous professional development and ethical behavior. The employee and faculty handbooks outline policies on governance, ongoing professional growth, and standards of conduct. These resources are readily accessible online. The college also provides clear guidelines and regular training on Title IX compliance, First Amendment rights, responsibilities surrounding disability services, and mandatory child abuse reporting. This comprehensive approach nurtures an academic and work environment that values every member of its community.

Auxiliary Functions Integrity

Integrity extends into athletics, the bookstore, information technology, and student housing. Deliberate practices and policies ensure ethical conduct and transparency across all sectors.

In student housing, for example, residents at MCC participate in mandatory training and receive a comprehensive housing manual which includes references to the student handbook detailing policies related to drug and alcohol use, consent training, behavior, and guests; thereby emphasizing ethical standards within living spaces.

In Fall 2024, the bookstore introduced Flat Rate Access**,** a program focused on student service, cost reduction, and transparency. Through clear policies on textbook purchases, costs, and returns, the program guarantees students can easily access necessary materials and enjoy straightforward business practices.

Technology Use Integrity

Integrity in technology use is evident in the Technology Usage Policy. It outlines the responsibilities of users and defines unacceptable activities. EICC's Information Security Program also supports this policy. It sets comprehensive cybersecurity standards, including aspects of risk management, data classification, protective measures, monitoring, training, and vendor interactions. Faculty and staff are required to complete cybersecurity training that addresses relevant practices and risks. Then, the IT department conducts phishing simulation tests to train, enable, and empower employees to identify and respond to cybersecurity threats.

Across every function, EICC demonstrates integrity. From financial operations to academic programs, human resources to auxiliary services, the college prioritizes ethical conduct, transparency, and accountability.

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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

2.B. The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and the public.

2.B.1

EICC's transparency and accuracy is evident in its comprehensive approach to disseminating information and ensuring all academic offerings, faculty, governance, and accreditation representations are accurate. The website, catalog, and marketing materials are primary platforms for communicating vital information to current and prospective students, faculty, and the wider community. These resources are created with clarity and accessibility in mind, making it easy for all stakeholders to find the information they need.

Website:

EICC's website redesign is a prime example of enhancing user experience while ensuring the accuracy and accessibility of information. This project, completed in 2023, was a comprehensive overhaul prioritizing inclusivity and accessibility. The redesign engaged stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, and external partners to ensure the final product would meet the needs of all users. The process involved extensive content reviews to guarantee information was up-to-date, accurate, and presented in a user-friendly manner.

The website is a reliable and easy-to-navigate resource that is organized into three main sections: Plan, Start, and Succeed. Each guides users through their EICC education. In the Plan section, students can explore academic programs, transfer opportunities, and potential career paths, including details on credentials, job outlooks, and starting salaries. This section leverages Modern Campus's Career Pathway model, incorporating EMSI data to provide current and prospective students with comprehensive employment information and expectations for various programs. EICC informs students about academic options and prepares them for successful post-graduation.

The Start section simplifies the application and enrollment process, providing information on financial aspects such as tuition, financial aid, and scholarships. The Succeed section is dedicated

to supporting students, providing information on resources they can access, including tutoring, mental health services, and on-campus food pantries.

Recognizing the importance of accuracy, timeliness, and relevance, EICC has established a website governance structure to provide oversight and regular reviews of the content.

College Catalog:

The college catalog lists the institution's academic programs, courses, admission requirements, and policies. Updated annually with input from academic departments, student development, and administration, it outlines educational pathways for students. It is a cornerstone for academic planning, providing detailed degree requirements, course content, and program-specific criteria. The catalog is user-friendly, with advanced search features to enable students to quickly find relevant information.

Student Handbook:

The Student Handbook is a critical resource and a comprehensive guide to campus life, academic policies, student services, and rights and responsibilities. It contains essential information on grading policies, the Student Code of Conduct, and grievance procedures.

Current Student Communications:

EICConnect, a comprehensive Self-Service portal, streamlines access to a range of student specific information and services. It enhances the student experience through a one-stop interface. Through this platform, students can manage their academic and financial aid status, including viewing bills, setting up optional payment plans, accessing bookstore information, and reviewing or creating academic and degree plans.

EICConnect:

EICConnect provides direct access to CANVAS Learning Management System for course materials and Brainfuse Online Tutoring for academic support. Additionally, it connects students to services such as notifications on class cancellations.

Guided Pathway Brochures:

Guided pathway brochures help students navigate academic and career options. These brochures outline the various academic programs available, potential career paths, and outcomes. By providing a clear roadmap, students can make informed decisions about their education and career goals.

Concurrent Enrollment Information:

EICC provides extensive information on high school concurrent enrollment opportunities. Before they graduate high school, students can earn EICC college credits and get a head start on their

post-secondary education. The website, concurrent student handbook, and parent handbook detail eligibility requirements, application processes, and available courses, giving students and their families the information needed to participate. EICC aligns the information and its practices to Iowa's Senior Year Plus Legislation and NACEP requirements.

Affordability Messaging:

EICC provides comprehensive information on the financial aspects of attending college to help students understand the cost of their education. The institution's website, financial aid brochures**,** and scholarship materials guide students on accessing financial resources; provide a breakdown of tuition, fees, and additional costs; and information on scholarship opportunities. Students can estimate educational expenses using the Net Price Calculator, which allows for transparency and aids financial planning. EICC details scholarship eligibility criteria and application deadlines so students can leverage opportunities and reduce their educational expenses. The college website links to Iowa College Aid, Future Ready Iowa, and FAFSA resources. EICC takes a multifaceted approach to providing information on affordability and cost so students can make informed decisions about their education and financial planning.

Faculty and Staff:

EICC ensures the availability and accuracy of information about faculty and staff across multiple platforms. Required elements, such as faculty contact information, are included in course syllabi, giving students direct access to their instructors. The college catalog and EICC website include a comprehensive personnel directory and another layer of transparency and accessibility. The website provides detailed information on open positions, including the necessary qualifications and responsibilities, salary ranges, health benefits, and community advantages. In 2023, EICC adopted PeopleAdmin software to streamline its hiring process and improve communication with applicants.

Governance:

The Board leads governance and strategic direction at EICC. The members are elected by constituents and serve without pay. Board operations and decisions are publicly accessible on the website and during monthly public meetings, which provide public accountability. Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are reviewed regularly as outlined in Criterion 1 and published on the college website.

Accreditation relationships:

EICC's website provides transparent access to information on its accreditation relationships**.** This enables students and stakeholders to make informed decisions and reflects the value of EICC programs and excellence in higher education. Accreditation information includes Higher Learning Commission (HLC), National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), Iowa Department of Education and program-specific accreditations.

In providing current and easily accessible information, EICC demonstrates transparency, accuracy, and support for students. Coupled with its inclusive education and student services, EICC is fostering a supportive and informative educational environment.

2.B.2

EICC offers an array of opportunities for students in research, community engagement, and experiential learning.

Students can participate in projects in general education classes and the Honors Program. A notable example from 2023 involved students from the Intro to Sociology course at the Clinton campus, who conducted independent research approved by the Institutional Review Board. Three of these papers were presented at the National Community College Humanities Conference, with travel expenses supported by the EICCD and the Paul B. Sharar foundations. The Honors Program offers two seminars each semester with a strong research component and opportunities for research-focused Independent Studies.

Community engagement at EICC includes volunteering**,** leveraging institutional resources, providing financial support, and participating in non-profit boards. Students engage in community service through programs such as Silver and Blue, Honors service-learning projects, Phi Theta Kappa chapters, and other organizations. The Scott Community College Culinary program collaborates with two area schools in the Tastebuds program, teaching culinary skills to students with disabilities. EICC hosts community events such as the MCC Family Fun Day, Bickelhaupt Ice Cream Social, and Martin Luther King Day celebrations.

Experiential learning opportunities include hands-on labs, work-based learning, and apprenticeships. Programs such as Culinary and CNC have apprenticeship options, organized in partnership with employers and aligned with state Workforce Development division guidelines. Clinical experiences in Health programs provide hands-on learning in healthcare facilities, overseen by clinical coordinators. Moreover, student activities funds allocated by EICC support travel to professional conferences, enhancing the educational experiences of students in organizations like Skills USA and Business Professionals of America.

EICC's impact on economic development is significant, as detailed in a state-wide "The Economic Value of Iowa's Community Colleges" report. Results show that certificate holders earn, on average, $4,300 more annually than those without a college education. Advisory Boards**,** including local business and industry partners, provide essential feedback that influences program curricula. The Last-Dollar Scholarship program, along with EICC's own Workforce grant, financially assists students, particularly those in high-demand career fields. The Workforce and Economic Development division supports local workforce development through the Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training Program (260E) and the Iowa Jobs Training Program (260F). The Iowa Small Business Development Center at EICC aids small businesses in securing financing and increasing sales, contributing to job creation and business growth.

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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

2.C.1.

The EICC Board operates within a framework that ensures it is well-trained, knowledgeable, and capable of making informed decisions concerning financial and academic policies and practices.

The legal basis of the Board's operations, as stated in Board Policy 202, is grounded in Iowa Code 260C. It mandates that the Board act as an agent of the state, ensuring educational programs are implemented in alignment with state laws and constitutional provisions. This alignment with statutory requirements ensures the Board's actions are legally sound and in accordance with state mandates.

Board Policy 102: Educational Philosophy is the core guide for the Board, directing how education policies and decisions are made. It sets the principles and standards for the Board's actions, ensuring they match the institution's goals and values, which helps the Board make clear, purpose-driven choices in the complex field of educational governance. This approach improves education quality, supports the institution's long-term goals, and meets the needs of everyone involved.

Adherence to Board Policy 201: The Statement of Guiding Principles underscores the importance of continuous improvement and regular in-service training for members, furthering its informed governance. Monthly workshops held prior to board meetings demonstrate the Board's dedication to continuous learning and improvement. Members are well-equipped and

effective in their governance roles. During monthly Staff Impact Reports, the Board is updated and informed on programs, goals, and strategic efforts.

The Board is committed to transparency and public accountability. The policy adoption process requires public readings and allows for open feedback. The meticulous review of policies, with the last review cycle completed in the 2022-2023 academic year, ensures that the Board's actions reflect current best practices and legal requirements.

The comprehensive onboarding process for new Board members includes orientation manuals, one-on-one meetings with the chancellor, and pre-meeting gatherings, to ensure all members are thoroughly prepared for their responsibilities. In Spring 2024, members engaged a consultant to facilitate a robust training program.

The Board participates in workshops**,** state, and national conferences through its affiliations with Community Colleges for Iowa, Iowa Association of Community College Trustees (IACCT) and the Association of Community College Trustees. Board members attend the National ACCT Conference and have presented significant college initiatives. EICC Board Trustee Debbie Tappendorf was appointed chair of the IACCT board in July 2024 and serves on the national ACCT board of directors.

Specific policies, such as Board Policy 221, 702, 745, 747 and 202, detail legal, moral, and fiduciary responsibilities of the members, including a required annual audit of financial affairs by a certified public accountant. These policies, alongside the regular financial oversight conducted by the Board during review of monthly reports and bills, highlight rigorous processes are in place to fulfill the Board's fiduciary duties.

The Board is a governing body thoroughly trained, knowledgeable, and engaged in fulfilling its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. Through legal adherence, continuous learning, transparent policy-making, and rigorous financial oversight, the Board meets and sets a high standard for governance in the context of academic and financial policies and practices.

2.C.2.

The Board upholds and enhances the college's integrity and effectiveness. Board Policy 221: Code of Ethics**,** emphasizes the trustees' commitment to act with integrity, foster positive relationships among board members, fulfill their obligations to Area IX, and collaborate effectively with the chancellor and the Senior Leadership Team. This commitment is exemplified in the Board's adoption of a formal self-evaluation process in October 2023, demonstrating its ongoing drive for self-improvement and accountability.

Annual organizational meetings are conducted each December in accordance with Board Policy 244, following the regular school elections as mandated by law. The Board addresses various procedural and official matters including the confirmation of election results, appointments, and setting regular meeting times and locations. These allow the Board to maintain a structured and effective governance framework.

In addressing the college's interests and those of its stakeholders, the Board engages in practices that are inclusive and transparent. Per Iowa Code Chapters 21 and 22, the Board conducts public meetings and maintains public records of their deliberations, minutes, and agendas. Regular board meetings are open to the public and cover personnel, financial reports, and project updates, among others. The Board conducts hearings for significant resolutions and encourages public participation in budget reviews and construction projects. Regular board meetings include a Staff Impact Report highlighting the institution's mission and achievements.

The Board's policies, reviewed over a three-year cycle with input from stakeholders, define the framework for their roles. The Board sets the college's strategic direction, mission, vision, core values, and strategic goals. Regular evaluations and goal setting based on the Board's self-assessment is a proactive approach to governance, continuous improvement, and alignment with the college's needs and priorities.

The Board employs a comprehensive governance model that prioritizes ethical leadership, stakeholder engagement, transparency, and strategic oversight to ensure EICC's ongoing development and success.

2.C.3.

EICC's governance is rooted in stakeholder feedback, ensuring its decisions and initiatives align with community needs and aspirations. The Board actively engages students, faculty, local businesses, and the broader community in its decision-making process.

This commitment is evident in regular board meetings, which are publicly accessible as mandated by Iowa Code Chapters 20 and 21, and Board Policy 802. A designated "audience and communication" segment allows individuals and community groups to present concerns, suggestions, and feedback directly to the trustees.

Board Policy 805 speaks to the Board's receptiveness to public input, highlighting its dedication to consider diverse perspectives. This means governance is shaped by valuable community's contributions.

The Board invites public input on the college's annual budget through a public hearing, in line with Board Policy 704. Per Iowa Code 26.12, public hearings are also held for construction contracts exceeding $25,000.

The Board engaged stakeholders during development of the Strategic Plan. Drafted with extensive input from faculty, staff, and the wider college community, this plan is directing the college's future.

The Board strives to address community needs, as shown by the Career Advancement Centers project, which garnered support from over 70% of the community. The facilities allow EICC to respond to the demand for skilled workers and upgrade educational facilities. The project was shaped by the input and backing of key local stakeholders, including K-12 school districts and

economic and business leaders. Area 9 schools made enrollment commitments, which underscored the community's recognized need and financial viability for the project.

By encouraging a collaborative environment where all voices are heard, EICC's Board enhances its impact on local economic development and workforce preparation. This governance model, especially evident in projects significantly affecting education and community development, illustrates the critical role of stakeholder input in enriching educational offerings and effectively meeting community needs.

2.C.4.

The Board's Code of Ethics addresses conflict of interest**.** Board Policy 224 states: "...no member of the Board shall knowingly be interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract, written or unwritten, for services to be performed and/or material to be furnished to EICC unless such materials or services are pursuant to an award or contract let after competitive bidding." The Board annually signs a Conflict of Interest/Duality of Interest Certification Statement, individually agreeing to report any conflicts to the chancellor.

EICC has five foundations contributing to the ongoing financial stability of the institution and maintaining affordability for students. The foundations provide scholarships, support capital projects, and provide emergency and professional development funding. All foundation board members also sign a Conflict of Interest/Duality of Interest Certification Statement. These statements prevent members from seeking personal, professional, or political gain.

2.C.5.

The Board delegates day-to-day management of the institution as outlined in Board Policy 201, which states the Board must: "...recognize and maintain the distinction between activities which are appropriate to the Board of Trustees as the legislative, governing body of Eastern Iowa Community College District (Merged Area IX), and those administrative activities that are to be performed by the Executive Officer and his or her staff in the exercise of delegated authority"

Newley-elected board members go through an orientation to learn about EICC's organizational structure, the difference between governance and administration, what these roles entail, and their role within the institution.

Board Policy 304 outlines the Executive Officer's duties and responsibilities. Board Policy 648 designates the chancellor and faculty as: "...responsible for developing general education policies and programs of study." Policy 672 states: "...the Executive Officer, assisted by administration and faculty, shall establish District-wide requirements for the issuance of certificates, diplomas, and degrees." Policy 660 states: "...the Executive Officer, assisted by administration and faculty, shall establish a District-wide system of student evaluation and grade reporting."

In Policy 647, faculty are charged with: "...in collaboration with department coordinators and instructional deans, [to] develop standards and procedures to evaluate student progress in

accordance with expectations established by the district's accrediting body, the Higher Learning Commission." They accomplish these tasks through curriculum development and review, assessment activities, and council and committee work. The Educational Programs, Policies and Curriculum Council (EPC) is one of the primary mechanisms for faculty collaboration in developing education policies and curriculum. In FY2017, EICC's Instructional Council was reconfigured into the EPC. The council went from 13 administrators and three faculty to 10 faculty and four administrators. EPC makes curriculum and academic policy recommendations following an approval process that includes the Academic Leadership Council (ALC), Senior Leadership Team (SLT), and Board as needed. EPC's charge and activities are addressed in more detail in section 5.B.3. In the past several years, all full-time faculty have participated in student learning assessment.

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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

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

Board Policy 427, reviewed and approved in August 2023, states that professional employees:

- "...shall be entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results."
- "...shall be entitled to the freedom of selection of textbooks, instructional approaches, audio-visual aids and other teaching aids, within budgetary limitations."
- "...shall be entitled to freedom in the classroom to discuss matters relevant to the subject, including those that may be controversial."
- "...are citizens and members of a learned profession. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline."

Furthermore, the policy states: "dismissal will not be used to restrain professional employees in their exercise of academic freedom or other rights of American citizens."

Board Policy 445: Non-Discrimination/Anti-harassment, also address academic freedom: "...the college is committed to providing a safe, anti-harassing, and non-discriminatory environment that protects the civil rights of individuals, and the college recognizes the constitutional protection of academic freedom in the classroom. This policy is not intended to restrict serious discussion of controversial issues in a training or academic situation."

The institution's complete statement on Freedom of Speech and Expression, reviewed and approved by the Board in August 2021, provides official policy, and delineates protected and non-protected activities. Sections also cover First Amendment protections for student organizations, student government, and campus public forums. The final section, Complaints, outlines steps a person can take if they are aggrieved by a violation of the policy.

EICC's Core Values, approved by the Board in December 2021, affirm the value of the free and open exchange of ideas. The value of diversity states: "...[w]e believe learning is an ongoing process of discovery and achieving academic excellence depends upon the exchange of ideas, the ability to ask questions, constructive feedback, and academic freedom." The value of collaboration commits to: "...building dynamic relationships that lead to meaningful

communication and informed decision-making that considers and values the diverse perspectives of students, faculty, staff, and our community."

EICC's Statement of Professional Standards**,** states: "We embrace and support diversity, inclusion, and equity in our practices...." and "...[w]e communicate openly, honestly, and respectfully, welcoming and valuing different perspectives and opinions."

In compliance with Iowa HF744, all EICC students, faculty, and staff complete First Amendment training, provided by Community Colleges for Iowa. HF744 states, "Each public institution of higher education shall provide training on free speech under the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States to all students, faculty, and staff on an annual basis, which elected officials and staff shall be permitted to attend." Developed in partnership with Community Colleges of Iowa and the other 14 Iowa Community Colleges, the training is completed on the college's learning management system.

Iowa HF802 covers "...requirements related to racism or sexism trainings at, and diversity and inclusion efforts by, governmental agencies and entities, school districts, and public post-secondary educational institutions." Passage of the law created faculty concern and confusion regarding if and how certain topics could be addressed in their classes. Faculty requested institutional clarification on how to balance freedom of expression with the limitations of HF802. In response, the vice chancellor for academic affairs held discussions and training sessions at each campus.

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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

2.E.1.

EICC maintains ethical standards and research oversight. The Institutional Review Board (IRB), established in 2006, evaluates research projects to ensure compliance with ethical standards, covering aspects such as informed consent, confidentiality, and participant safety.

To reinforce ethical research standards, EICC mandates approval from the IRB for any individual seeking to conduct research within the institution. This approval process guarantees alignment with ethical and regulatory guidelines. Additionally, Board Policy 575 prohibits student interviews without prior administrative approval, to safeguard students' rights and well-being.

2.E.2.

EICC provides resources to support research and scholarly practices among faculty, staff, and students. Initial research guidance is offered in English Composition courses. Faculty with discipline-specific expertise also guide students and foster ethical research. Campus librarians present information literacy, research aids, and faculty-requested topics. EICC ensures academic integrity through tools, including the Canvas plagiarism and AI checker powered by Copyleaks, on-campus testing centers and virtual proctoring through Honorlock, which is integrated into the Canvas platform. These measures ensure a reliable and responsible application of knowledge during assessments.

2.E.3.

Board Policy 520 sets the expectation for students to maintain integrity and uphold high standards of honor in their academic endeavors, and to conduct themselves appropriately within the college environment. Comprehensive policies on academic dishonesty and technology usage

are available through the college's website, Student Handbook, program handbooks, catalog, and course syllabi.

Library staff provide orientation sessions which can be scheduled by faculty. These sessions include topics such as information literacy, utilizing library services and resources, evaluating sources, and search strategies, among others specified by instructors. Students have ready access to the Canvas library resource page containing information on citation, information literacy, using library tools and databases. Library staff are available to assist students, faculty, and staff in person and virtually.

The college is actively developing guidelines for AI (Artificial Intelligence) technology and involving administrators and faculty to shape these guidelines. Faculty can create AI guidance tailored to their courses and respective disciplines. Examples of AI policies from other schools have been provided to faculty for consideration. Departments actively communicate evolving guidelines and policies to faculty providing discipline-specific professional development.

2.E.4.

EICC maintains and enforces students' Rights and Responsibilities and Code of Conduct policies, which include explicit procedures and consequences for academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. College deans have the authority to initiate disciplinary proceedings for academic dishonesty**.** Consequences range from a zero on an assignment to an F in the course. Instructors are empowered to address cases promptly, informing students of allegations, and taking appropriate action. EICC's recent implementation of Maxient case management technology reflects its commitment to use up-to-date tools and practices to efficiently handle academic integrity cases.

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2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) is deeply committed to maintaining integrity, ensuring that its conduct is both ethical and responsible. The institution has comprehensive policies and processes to promote fair and ethical behavior among its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. This commitment is evident in EICC's Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Professional Standards; all created with extensive stakeholder input and regularly revisited. The Mission is central to the Board of Trustees' governance and strategic planning efforts.

Integrity is evident across all EICC functions, including financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary services. The institution maintains financial integrity through detailed reporting, rigorous auditing, and conscientious fiscal management. Transparency and accountability are key components of its financial operations and policies. Academic integrity is upheld through meticulous curriculum development and review processes, ensuring educational programs meet high standards of quality and relevance. Compliance with regulations like FERPA and transparent communication about student rights further demonstrates EICC's dedication to ethical conduct.

The college is committed to transparency and accuracy in its interactions with students and the public. Representations about academic offerings, course requirements, faculty, costs, governance structure, and accreditation relationships are accurate and clear. Comprehensive resources including the website, college catalog, and Student Handbook provide essential information. The institution's dedication to community engagement and experiential learning underscores its commitment to provide a supportive educational environment. Through these measures, EICC acts with integrity, fostering an ethical and responsible culture.

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

3.A.1.

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) maintains the currency of its programs to ensure they meet the levels of student performance appropriate for the credentials awarded. This process is supported by:

EICC's relationship with the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) is integral to maintaining the quality and relevance of educational offerings. The IDOE approves new courses and programs at state community colleges, ensuring they adhere to established academic standards and meet community educational needs. This oversight includes subject expert consultants who review course content and learning outcomes before any program or course receives state endorsement. Additionally, EICC participates in the Iowa Common Course Numbering System, which standardizes course names and numbers, enhancing statewide educational coherence and transferability.

EICC's Course Development Model (CDM) defines the structure and content of each course, including titles, credit and contact hours, prerequisites, co-requisites, descriptions, and learning outcomes. Faculty craft each CDM to ensure course offerings meet academic standards and industry expectations. Once approved, the CDM becomes the template for developing the syllabi, which ensures consistency and quality across all sections of the course and delivery modalities. Educational Programs, Policy, and Curriculum Council (EPC) reviews and approves all new courses, modifications, and program developments. Comprised of faculty, staff, and

curriculum experts, the council vets all curriculum proposals for academic rigor, alignment with industry standards, and current and future workforce needs. The council reviews the proposed learning outcomes, course content, and assessment methods. This structured and collaborative process guarantees that EICC's curricular offerings remain current, relevant, and prepare students for the future.

Articulation and transfer relationships facilitate the seamless transfer of courses, ensuring they meet the academic standards required by EICC and the institutions that receive its students. The college engages with the Liaison Advisory Committee on Transfer Students (LACTS), which works closely with Iowa Regent Universities and community colleges to align courses and streamline the transfer process. Additionally, established Transfer Major Partnerships guarantee EICC's courses precisely align with the curricula of the public and private universities and colleges, providing students with a clear and efficient transfer pathway. These agreements are systematically reviewed and updated to meet evolving academic demands and student needs. EICC continues to work with St. Ambrose, Augustana, Mount Mercy, and more to create additional opportunities for transfer credit. Specialized Program Accreditations ensure EICC's career and technical education programs meet industry standards and provide a relevant, high-quality education that aligns with employer expectations. Based on the accreditation cycle, each program goes through an extensive self-study and standards review.

Students in many of EICC's career and technical programs participate in third-party testing to earn recognized industry credentials. Many programs must maintain a certain pass rate within these exams to maintain accreditation.

CTE (Career & Technical Education) Program Advisory Committees and Sector Boards are composed of industry experts and educators who ensure EICC's programs remain aligned with current industry standards and workforce needs. They facilitate a dialogue between the college and the industry, enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of programs. These committees play a critical role in updating and refining programs to respond to evolving market conditions.

Work Based Learning opportunities offer students practical, hands-on experience in their field of study, aligning academic theories with real-world application. This prepares students for the workforce.

New Program Development involves market analysis, curriculum development, and various approvals**.** This includes a Notice of Intent to the IDOE**,** Higher Learning Commission Substantive Change, and EICC Board of Trustees approval**.** Each step ensures new programs are relevant and meet educational standards.

Additional data and information sources include feedback from students, graduates, and regional employers, and from Iowa's Outcomes Dashboard, and Regent Transfer Reports. This data supports continuous improvement in program content and teaching strategies, ensuring EICC graduates are well-prepared to meet the demands of their respective fields.

These processes and relationships collectively ensure EICC's programs are current and aligned with higher education and industry standards, thereby supporting the successful career paths of its students.

3.A.2.

EICC clearly articulates and differentiates learning goals for students across certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs. These goals are structured at three levels: Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

EICC's comprehensive ILOs encompass Teamwork, Critical Thinking, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Problem-Solving. These outcomes are designed by the Outcomes Assessment Committee in collaboration with the Educational Policies Committee (EPC). The ILOs set the standard for all courses, ensuring that students, regardless of their academic pathway, strive toward mastery of these skills throughout their program of study. The college employs various forms of assessment to gauge and refine these outcomes continuously.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):

Each academic department at EICC defines PLOs that align with the rigor and requirements of their specific courses and programs. These outcomes are meticulously crafted to ensure they meet the exacting standards of the division and curriculum committee.

To enhance the assessment process, starting from the academic year 2022-23, EICC incorporated a new element into program review self-studies. This addition requires programs to reflect on the stages of assessment and highlight when outcomes are introduced, reinforced, and assessed. For example, the Information Technology program outlines how and when knowledge is introduced, reinforced, and assessed within its curriculum, while the Radiology department demonstrates enhanced assessment methods and action plans.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

At the course level, student learning outcomes are established using Bloom's Taxonomy to accurately describe the expected level and ability of students within each certificate and degree program. This approach ensures the outcomes are appropriately challenging and tailored to the students' progress and field of study. For instance, developmental math courses, which are prerequisites for many 100-level math courses, have specific outcomes that prepare students for college level math in their chosen fields.

Assessment and Continuous Improvement:

Board Policy 647 mandates faculty to collaborate with deans and coordinators to develop standards and procedures for assessing student progress and achievement of learning outcomes.

EICC fosters a culture of continuous improvement by organizing assessment days, establishing robust assessment policies, forming assessment committees, and participating in the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy.

Co-Curricular Assessment:

Co-curricular departments at EICC employ the standards set by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). These standards, developed by member associations and content area experts, are mapped to the ILOs. Each department incorporates at least one CAS standard in their annual pre-assessment plans, ensuring a comprehensive approach to student development and learning.

Through these structured and differentiated learning goals, EICC ensures students achieve the necessary skills and knowledge, tailored to their specific educational paths, preparing them for success in their professional and personal lives.

3.A.3.

All faculty must follow a course CDM, no matter if they are teaching on-campus, online, at an auxiliary location, or in the concurrent enrollment sections. This ensures program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and locations.

A CDM outlines and defines course and student learning outcomes. Each new course is sent through EICC's system, Curriculog, for approval of course details and learning outcomes by the division, department coordinator, registrar team, assessment team, and EPC. Once approved, it is placed within the upcoming year's catalog. The course learning outcomes are pulled from the CDM to the Simple Syllabus, which is used by all faculty teaching the course.

At EICC, CDM adherence is required per the faculty job description**.** During the evaluation cycle, full-time faculty syllabi are reviewed by the divisional deans and periodically during non-review cycles. Program directors and department coordinators review adjunct instructors' syllabi to ensure the CDM requirements are followed. Faculty liaisons observe concurrent courses, and they review every syllabus and discuss content and skills with concurrent faculty. This ensures the CDM is followed, and assessment instruments are comparable.

During program and general education review, graduation rates, retention rates, and course completion are studied to identify any barriers or gaps in the various modalities. Courses are reviewed and as necessary CDMs are updated. Within the self-study, each academic department is asked to reflect on the data, address any outliers, and create an action plan to accommodate new goals based on current data.

Board Policy 637 requires all courses to follow the credit hour policy as defined by state and federal regulations. In addition, Administrative Policy C4 describes current federal and state guidelines, definitions of various modalities, and how EICC upholds that definition. In addition, the college includes the definition on the Simple Syllabus for each course and students have

additional understanding as to how much time they will need to dedicate, inside and outside the course, over the semester.

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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

3.B.1.

Alignment with Institutional Mission:

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) Mission emphasizes delivering high-quality education and training that prepares a skilled workforce, provides equitable access to higher education, and strengthens communities. The college's general education program reflects that mission, as it equips students with fundamental competencies essential for personal and professional success.

State Compliance and Curriculum Design:

EICC's general education program complies with Iowa Administrative Code 281, Chapter 21.4. The college offers students a range of learning experiences and opportunities to build essential knowledge and skills including effective communication, both oral and written, critical thinking, and appreciation of cultural diversity, scientific and quantitative reasoning, and ethical judgment.

General Education Definition:

EICC defines general education in a way that showcases the purpose of that specific curriculum. The definition is posted on the website, in the Student Handbook, and the academic catalog in a way that emphasizes categories of courses, and the career preparation skills students will gain.

Curriculum Goals and Learning Outcomes:

EICC's general education framework nurtures key skills including teamwork, DEI, critical thinking, and problem solving. These Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) ensure comprehensive skill acquisition, preparing students for workforce and societal participation. General education courses can also be prerequisites or core courses within some CTE academic programs.

Curricular Assessment:

EICC's curricular assessment process aligns each course with ILOs. Overseen by the Outcomes Assessment Committee and the Educational Programs, Policies, and Procedures Committee (EPC), the periodic reviews of emerging educational needs ensure curriculum is relevant, effective, and promotes continuous improvement.

General Education Program Review:

EICC conducts comprehensive reviews of its general education program. A general education committee comprising of members from the curriculum and assessment departments, registrar's office, and general education faculty conduct a detailed review. They analyze regional community college data, course offerings, transfer pathways, and student performance within general education courses, then make recommendations for curriculum enhancements and communication processes.

3.B.2.

General education at Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) is grounded in a well-defined philosophy that imparts broad knowledge, intellectual concepts, and essential skills and attitudes expected of every college-educated individual.

EICC's commitment to seamless transfer of courses across Iowa is facilitated by the Liaison Advisory Committee on Transfer Students (LACTS), a statewide articulation agreement between community colleges and public universities. LACTS has established general education categories for Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) degrees, ensuring a smooth transition for students. Additionally, the state has developed Transfer majors for public and private institutions, providing defined pathways that enable students to transfer with junior status and a minimum of 18 credits toward their major.

The general education courses and requirements for each program at EICC are clearly detailed in the academic catalog and reflected in student degree plans. This includes the categories of required credits, total general education credits needed, and pertinent transfer rules for associate degrees.

EICC's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are based on the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) VALUE Rubrics. EICC has adopted the VALUE rubrics for Teamwork, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI),

and uses them as its ILO templates. Faculty subcommittees periodically review these rubrics and categories for relevancy. In Spring 2024 as part of the HLC's Assessing General Education Series, an HLC mentor reviewed each rubric. In Fall 2024, recommendations for enhancing the assessment of general education will be reviewed by the Outcomes Assessment Committee, faculty, and administration.

EICC faculty engage in annual Assessment Days to review best practices, processes, and outcomes. These sessions involve curriculum mapping, analyzing student learning outcome data, and aligning ILOs with courses. Workshops emphasize the importance of ILOs in relation to student learning, career readiness, EICC's Strategic Plan, and the role of faculty and staff in assessment.

The program review cycle includes self-studies by Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Arts and Science programs. Departments reflect on assessment outcomes, graduation and retention rates, barrier courses, and curriculum changes to enhance student success. In 2023, the math department and the general education program review committee explored ways to include the college algebra course in the general education curriculum. As a result, MAT 138 was added to support both transferability and foundational math outcomes for STEM pathways and careers.

3.B.3.

EICC provides an educational experience that acknowledges human and cultural diversity and actively incorporates it into growth opportunities and lifelong skills necessary for students to thrive in a multicultural world. This commitment is evident within key initiatives and institutional practices that foster diversity, equity, and inclusion.

EICC's Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Strategic Plan display the college's responsibility and drive to prepare students for a multicultural and diverse world, provide equitable access to higher education, and promote workforce readiness through the values of Discovery, Social Justice, Belonging, Collaboration, and Caretaking.

Through the Strategic Plan pillar of Equity, EICC fosters an inclusive culture that respects diversity and places equity as a fundamental consideration in policy and decision making. The college's Diversity Council plays a pivotal role in ensuring policies, processes, and educational offerings are building a diverse and equitable community. Comprised of faculty and staff, the Council has established a designation for Diversity Rich Courses. Through these, students can explore diversity through course content and extracurricular learning experiences. Students have engaged in projects such as macroeconomics country research, which enhances their understanding of global economies and cultural nuances.

EICC's Diversity Academy provides professional development opportunities to faculty, staff, and administrators seeking to learn more about current issues in diversity in higher education and within our community. Through speakers, presentations, and collaborative projects, participants explore and address issues, often leading to substantial institutional improvements, such as enhanced privacy spaces for nursing mothers and others with privacy needs.

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion further emphasize the skills necessary for students to navigate, and positively contribute to the global society. These outcomes challenge students to critically analyze their perspectives, understand institutional power dynamics, and apply creative solutions to social inequalities. This educational framework prepares students to engage with, and contribute to, a diverse world.

Co-curricular activities play a significant role in reinforcing DEI concepts. Student organizations, including All Kinds of People, Black Student Union, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and the Diversity Club, align their goals with EICC's educational objectives, thereby providing a comprehensive approach to learning about diversity. The college also hosts cultural activities and food events, as well as training and guest speakers to give students more learning opportunities and enrichment.

3.B. 4.

EICC contributes to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge, aligning well with its institutional mission. This contribution is evident across several disciplines and activities:

Humanities and Fine Arts

Art galleries on each campus display a diverse range of works from students, faculty, and other artists. Faculty and students also participate in local and regional exhibits, contributing works in art, sculpture, painting, fiber art, and graphic design. Artists whose work is featured in EICC's galleries often serve as guest speakers, teaching students more about their craft.

The Creative Writing Club and the annual publication "Inkwell" feature creative writing, visual artwork, and articles from the EICC community.

Theater and Performing Arts:

EICC's theater program is notably inclusive, providing every student the opportunity to participate on-stage or behind the scenes in bi-yearly productions. Past productions have included Little Shop of Horrors, RENT, Greater Tuna, Middletown, and the Real Inspector Hound. Productions often focus on themes of social justice and diversity, reflecting a commitment to these values within the curriculum.

Academic Societies:

The Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) honor society highlights student achievement and engagement. EICC's PTK members have been recognized with numerous awards for their active participation in academic and community-focused projects. PTK adopts a theme every two years, and students create and complete a project around the theme. For 2022-2023, the theme was Science of Play. PTK students created the BOOthday festival and invited families to take part in games, a petting zoo, face painting, and more. The students collected feedback through participant surveys and completed data analysis to assess the event and add to the project.

Science and Research:

Through the Honors Program, students can engage in advanced research projects and present their findings during annual honors banquets. These projects can span various scientific fields, including microbiology and environmental science. Additional research opportunities are provided through departmental independent study courses and integrated projects in science courses, supporting hands-on learning and practical application of theoretical knowledge.

Environmental Science and Collaborative Projects:

EICC's environmental science students participate in semester-long projects that compare local environmental issues with those in other regions, enhancing their understanding and providing a platform for inter-university collaboration.

The Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Internships provides students with an opportunity to engage in summer research at the Nahant Marsh Education Center. Students complete significant research projects, highlight their findings through a poster presentation and oral presentation. One notable project involved identifying marsh spider species through DNA sequence analysis.

Celebration of Inquiry/Poster Projects:

The Spring 2024 Celebration of Inquiry displayed students' original research on various subjects, including veteran suicide and prevention, mental health emergency interventions, effects of social media, environmental impacts of food production, and more. The students displayed their research and findings to the community and answered questions at this annual event.

Music Recitals:

EICC's music department hosts a recital each semester. Students taking vocal and instrumental courses, as well as music enthusiasts, prepare a solo or ensemble to present at the recital.

Alexander Clark Lecture Series

In collaboration with the Alexander Clark Foundation and the Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine, the college organizes an annual lecture highlighting diverse cultures. Authors discuss their writing and share their experiences.

Faculty Lecture Series

The English Department and the library established a faculty lecture series, providing a platform for faculty and staff to present on current events, intellectual discoveries, or their passion projects. The college community, including students, comes together to learn and engage on diverse topics ranging from the use of telescopes to intellectual freedom.

Community College Month Free Classes

Each April, EICC faculty and staff celebrate Community College Month by offering a series of free classes to the public. Classes have included starting a business, automotive maintenance, canning, beginner welding and cybersecurity. The goal is to promote lifelong learning and discovery. In April 2024, the college offered 29 free courses with 347 students enrolled.

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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

3.C.1.

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) is dedicated to ensuring that the composition of its faculty and staff mirrors the diversity of the communities it serves. This commitment aligns with the institution's mission and the needs of its constituencies. To enhance diversity among its employees, faculty, and students, EICC has implemented several proactive measures.

Recruitment and Hiring Initiatives

The Human Resources department actively seeks to attract diverse talent by advertising in specialized higher education publications. Other notable initiatives include:

- Women in Trades Video Series: This series showcases the contributions of women faculty in non-traditional fields, promoting gender diversity in technical and vocational disciplines.

- Way Up Conference Participation: EICC participates in this conference, which focuses on empowering women in higher education, thereby fostering an inclusive academic environment.

- Partnership with Quad Cities Hispanic Chamber: This collaboration helps EICC attract talent from the region's growing Hispanic community, strengthening the college's ties with diverse populations.

EICC adheres to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies, striving to recruit and employ a diverse and highly qualified workforce.

Annual Review and Systematic Staffing

EICC conducts an annual review to evaluate faculty and staff requirements. This review considers factors such as current faculty workload, projected enrollment trends, and anticipated changes in academic programs and workforce training demands. This data-informed approach ensures staffing adjustments are responsive and support the goal of effectively serving students and the community.

Faculty Hiring Practices

EICC's faculty hiring practices aim to attract candidates who excel in their fields and offer diverse perspectives. Faculty search committees play a crucial role in this process. These committees are composed of divisional deans, department coordinators, and faculty from related disciplines and other campuses. This diverse composition ensures an inclusive approach to candidate selection.

Core Values and Strategic Plan

EICC's commitment to diversity is embedded in its Core Values and Strategic Plan. By providing equitable access to higher education and striving to reflect the communities it serves, EICC strengthens the educational experience for all students.

These comprehensive efforts underscore EICC's dedication to creating a diverse, inclusive, and dynamic academic environment.

3.C.2.

EICC's faculty deliver high-quality educational programs and services, as evidenced by a 19:1 student-to-faculty ratio reported in the 2024 Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System (IPEDS). This favorable ratio enhances personalized student engagement and learning outcomes.

To maintain faculty composition and manage workload effectively, divisional deans, program directors, and department coordinators regularly evaluate full-time to part-time faculty ratios within Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Reviews. Faculty workloads are

managed within the guidelines set forth in the Faculty Master Agreement and Iowa Code 281-21.3 (260C), ensuring teaching responsibilities do not exceed established limits. When necessary, Senior Leadership is asked to open new full-time faculty positions or address shortages of qualified adjuncts based on data.

Faculty are critical in the hiring process. They assist in interviewing candidates and evaluating their readiness. Division deans frequently consult with department coordinators regarding candidates' experience and credentials. Faculty also serve on hiring committees for key positions such as deans, vice chancellors, and the chancellor.

Faculty qualifications are rigorously assessed during hiring and evaluations. A Faculty Qualification Report (FQR) is maintained for each faculty member. Faculty must adhere to a Quality Faculty Plan, which includes orientation, ongoing professional development, and activity tracking. This plan is reviewed annually by the Board and complies with Iowa Code 24.5(7).

Beyond instructional duties, full-time faculty are expected to support students and be engaged. Faculty lead curriculum and program development, participate in shared governance and contribute to student retention initiatives. They serve on committees such as the Educational Programs, Policies, and Procedures Committee, and the Outcomes Assessment Committee (OAC), which are essential for maintaining educational standards and assessing student performance.

OAC faculty members regularly engage in academic and co-curricular assessment processes. They suggest Assessment Day topics and activities, share best practices, and tackle Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy tasks. Faculty and student development staff attend Assessment Day events to learn about projects, processes, and best practices.

Faculty play a pivotal role in both CTE Program and General Education Reviews. In CTE Program Reviews, they analyze data, write self-studies, and develop follow-up action plans. Discipline-specific faculty assess course data, transferability, and overall student success during General Education Reviews. Faculty from related disciplines participate in CTE Program Reviews to ensure comprehensive evaluations.

With the recent expansion of CTE programs and building projects, faculty played a pivotal role in designing and determining equipment needs for classrooms and labs. They led facilitated discussions with their peers, Advisory Councils, and other stakeholders to assess workforce training needs and ensure the new spaces meet current and future training requirements.

Faculty also serve as club advisors, mentors, and participate in college activities. Their active involvement in hiring, retention, program review, and diversity committees highlight their essential role in fostering an inclusive and dynamic educational environment.

3.C.3.

EICC upholds the standards prescribed by the HLC, National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) and Iowa Department of Education, ensuring that all instructors are

appropriately qualified, including those involved in concurrent, contractual, and the Iowa Community College Online Consortium. The college's adherence to Iowa Community Colleges Faculty Qualifications Guide guarantees that regardless of their role—whether full-time, part-time, or concurrent instructors—all faculty meet the qualifications to provide a high-quality education to students. This is reflected in rigorous hiring processes and credential reviews, which align with the criteria set forth by the state and HLC.

According to the Iowa Administrative Code 281-24.5, all community college-employed instructors must meet specific minimum standards and requirements outlined in the institutional Quality Faculty Plan (QFP). Arts and science instructors must have at least a master's degree and relevant graduate credits related to their teaching fields. Those teaching in CTE must have appropriate degrees and certifications, or substantial practical experience, or specialized training, depending on the field.

The faculty qualification process at EICC is a comprehensive review of credentials for all categories of faculty including full-time, adjunct, and concurrent instructors. The state-mandated Faculty Qualifications Review (FQR) checklist is employed by each dean to consistently evaluate and confirm the qualifications of faculty against the established standards. The QFP outlined in EICC Administrative Procedure C20 adheres to state standards of ongoing professional development and provides opportunity for faculty input.

EICC's alignment with NACEP and Iowa Senior Year Plus standards fortifies its dedication to quality education. NACEP accreditation, essential for all Iowa community colleges, ensures that courses offered at high schools meet the same rigorous criteria as those provided on campus or online. In accordance with NACEP Faculty Standard 1, all concurrent enrollment instructors at EICC are approved by the relevant academic leadership and meet the minimum qualifications for teaching their respective courses, mirroring the criteria applied to on-campus instructors.

EICC adheres to state and national accreditation requirements to ensure all instructors, regardless of their teaching modality or contractual status, are fully qualified. This adherence meets legal and accreditation standards and ensures the highest quality education students expect and deserve.

3.C.4.

EICC places a strong emphasis on the systematic evaluation of faculty to ensure the highest standards of teaching and professional development. This rigorous evaluation process is designed to support continuous improvement and uphold the quality of education provided to students. EICC's comprehensive evaluation procedures for both full-time and adjunct faculty reflect its commitment to excellence and adherence to established contractual and administrative policies.

Full-Time Faculty Evaluation

EICC full-time faculty are evaluated according to contract specifications. Administrative Policy C18 specifies the number, timing, and process for faculty evaluations. The full-time faculty evaluation form is posted and contained within the policy for all deans to utilize for this process.

New full-time faculty are considered probationary and evaluated every term for three years. Non-probationary full-time faculty are evaluated every three years after they leave their probationary period. Faculty evaluations are conducted by divisional deans or the dean's designees. The evaluation includes a pre-observation conference, an observation, and a post-observation conference. The pre- and post-observation conferences include a discussion of the observation of the instructional process, a review of instructional competencies, an assessment of professional development, and a review of responsibilities to the college. Within the evaluation of professional development, five hours of professional development must be in assessment practices.

The observation includes reviewing the effectiveness and appropriateness of instructional delivery and student participation. The review of instructional competencies includes an examination of the instructor's syllabi, the design and usage of their Canvas shells for each course in the Learning Management System, use of student feedback, use of support services to assist students, and participation in EICC's Outcomes Assessment measurements. The assessment of their professional development involves reviewing their QFP, which documents their required professional development and when applicable, ensuring their professional certifications are complete. The examination of the instructor's responsibility to the college includes checking for the instructor's committee contributions and participation in college and departmental meetings. Included in the evaluation is an opportunity for the instructor to provide a self-assessment Instructor Narrative. This includes a summary of accomplishments, details about student feedback they collected, how they used the information to improve their instruction, and their goals for the next year.

All faculty, full-time and adjunct, receive a summary through Canvas from ICCOC, which shares their students' perceptions of their teaching. Approximately two weeks before the term ends, EICC conducts a survey for online courses called Blue**,** which is used by all classes for all colleges in the online consortium. EICC also uses a survey for the face-to-face courses developed jointly by EICC faculty and staff.

Adjunct oversight and evaluations

The syllabi from face-to-face adjunct faculty are reviewed by department coordinators each term. The syllabi from online adjunct faculty are reviewed by the eLearning Department. Alignment to the Course Development Model including assessment, student learning outcomes, and program learning outcomes are reviewed for accuracy. The Canvas shells of online adjunct are evaluated via a student survey every term by the eLearning Department.

Concurrent instructors are observed for the first three semesters of teaching and then once every three years. Observations are completed by faculty liaisons, who are college faculty who teach the same course or are in the same content area. Faculty liaisons complete an observation document, review notes with the concurrent instructors within two weeks of the observation and provide the syllabi and assessment to the Concurrent Enrollment Department.

3.C.5.

EICC has developed processes and resources to ensure instructors remain current in their disciplines, proficient in their teaching, and engaged in ongoing professional development. The key elements of these processes and resources are outlined below:

Adherence to Regulatory and Accreditation Standards:

EICC adheres to Iowa Code 261E and 281-IAC 24.5(7) regarding the Quality Faculty Plan (QFP) requirement, ensuring compliance with state accreditation standards and HLC Quality Faculty requirements. Each Iowa community college develops a QFP, approved by the Board of Trustees and the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE). This plan, reviewed annually, guides hiring and professional development, ensuring alignment with standards and educational advancements. Adherence to the QFP by all faculty is mandated by Board Policy 403, with compliance monitored through regular audits by the IDOE accreditation team.

Program-level third-party accreditation imposes additional requirements for faculty development or maintaining certifications. For instance, health faculty are required to maintain CPR certification and professional licensure.

EICC also meets NACEP standards, ensuring that concurrent instructors are well-prepared, and programs maintain high academic quality. NACEP Faculty Standard 3 requires concurrent enrollment instructors to participate in annual discipline-specific professional development and ongoing collegial interaction to enhance their pedagogy and knowledge in the discipline. EICC provides four discipline-specific professional development opportunities for concurrent instructors, demonstrating a commitment to educational excellence and continuous improvement.

Additional New Faculty Requirements:

For the first three years of employment, full-time faculty are probationary and required to engage in foundational professional development. This includes the New Faculty Teaching Institute and the New Faculty Development Course (NFDC), covering critical topics such as diverse learners, technology, community college philosophy, instructional strategies, and assessment of learning outcomes. Faculty also work with assigned mentors and record development activities in their QFP.

Ongoing Professional Development:

Full-time faculty must complete 45 clock hours of professional development every three years, with specific hours dedicated to assessment activities. Adjunct faculty, after four years of continuous teaching, must complete six clock hours every three years. These requirements ensure faculty stay current with pedagogical techniques and developments in their disciplines.

Onboarding and Support for Adjunct Faculty:

EICC provides comprehensive onboarding for adjunct faculty to ensure they are well-prepared and supported in their roles. Adjuncts are connected with department coordinators or lead faculty

within their disciplines for guidance and support. Concurrent instructors receive additional support from the associate director of concurrent enrollment faculty. EICC's online division assists adjuncts in instructional design, enhancing their ability to deliver quality online education. Campus libraries also assist in utilizing Open Educational Resources (OERs), providing further educational support. Mandatory training on FERPA and Title IX ensures compliance with federal regulations. Additionally, adjuncts are encouraged to engage with the broader academic community by attending advisory committee meetings, discipline-specific meetings, and development days.

Discipline-Specific Development:

EICC complies with NACEP requirements, tracking annual discipline-specific professional development (DPSD) for concurrent instructors, facilitated by the Curriculum and Concurrent Enrollment Department. This includes four DSPD days throughout the academic year.

Institutional Development Opportunities:

The college organizes numerous institutional development initiatives, including Fall Development Day, semester start-up sessions, Leaders for Engagement, Advocacy, and Development Institute (L.E.A.D.), the New Faculty Teaching Institute, and the Diversity Academy. Faculty can participate in educational sessions, network, and exchange best practices across disciplines. Additionally, the college offers all employees a LinkedIn Learning subscription, providing a wide range of learning opportunities and content that can be integrated into courses.

Recognition and Support for Faculty Development:

EICC recognizes the exceptional contributions of faculty by awarding Distinguished Faculty status, which includes three years of professional development funding. In 2022, the College introduced two significant initiatives: the Employee Educational Advancement Fund and the Employee Professional Development Fund, supporting the professional and educational advancement of all employees. Additionally, professional development is supported by the college foundations, as well as college and department budgets.

These processes and resources ensure EICC faculty remain strong in their teaching roles, updated in their academic fields, and pursuing continuous improvement.

3.C.6.

EICC faculty utilize various teaching practices to spark student inquiry inside and outside the classroom. Through professional development, faculty continue to study active teaching practices that present student inquiry. Fall Development Day and Spring Symposium sessions have included Flipped Classroom, Cutting Through the CRAAP of Information, Designing Learning to Accommodate All Learners and Resilience Building Tools for Students and Teachers.

EICC faculty promote speeches, discussions, debates, questions, and conversations within their courses, office hours, and co-curricular events. Through the online platform Canvas, students can communicate with faculty on discussion boards and the messaging system. Faculty and staff also use Zoom and Teams to communicate with students during class or office hours.

Faculty expectations are outlined in the faculty job description**.** At least five office hours are required weekly. Faculty who teach online hold office hours via Zoom or another communication platform. All faculty include information on the syllabi as to how students can communicate and reach them, and they interact with students synchronously and asynchronously.

All faculty must communicate course objectives, student learning outcomes, institutional learning outcomes, instructional processes, assessments, methods, and attendance policies to all students.

3.C.7.

EICC's recruitment process is defined by Board Policy 402: Recruitment and Selection. Staff vacancy announcements detail required education, experience, skills, knowledge, and attributes necessary for each position. Administrative Procedure A2 Handling Position Vacancies outlines and standardizes the hiring process across the institution, mirroring the rigor applied to faculty. All new hires, including those in student support services, must complete mandatory training on essential regulations and rights including FERPA, Title IX, and the First Amendment Free Speech. This ensures staff are well-informed on legal and ethical standards.

Ongoing Professional Development: Staff are encouraged to participate in continuous learning opportunities like poverty simulation, Ellucian product training, mental health**,** and emergency response training. All employees participate in Fall Development Day. Staff within student development areas are trained in new or modified programs, transfer planning, and financial aid practices. The registrars annually host front-line training to ensure compliance with student records and quality customer service.

Tuition Reimbursement: EICC offers tuition reimbursement for courses and degrees that enhance professional knowledge and skills. Through the Employee Educational Advancement Fund and the Employee Professional Development Fund, all staff can apply for financial assistance to attend conferences, workshops, or advance their education.

Leadership Development: Programs such as the Diversity Academy, the L.E.A.D. Institute, and the Iowa Community College Leadership Institute cultivate the skills of staffers across various organizational levels.

Access to Training: EICC provides all employees with membership to the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) and subscription to LinkedIn Learning. These resources contribute to professional growth in staff.

Professional Associations: EICC maintains memberships in key professional organizations, including the Iowa Association of College Admissions Counseling, National Council for Marketing and Public Relations, Association of Institutional Researchers, Iowa Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Veteran's Affairs School Certifying Official, Illinois/Iowa Association of Higher Education and Disability, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Iowa Student Financial Aid Administrators, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, Association of Title IX Administrators, and the Iowa Community College Student Services Association. These memberships keep staff informed on quality standards and best practices within their respective fields and provide them with the opportunity to attend workshops and conferences.

Evaluation: As per Board Policy 407, EICC professional and support staff have a new employee evaluation after 90 days and an annual evaluation. These assess whether employees are meeting professional standards and provide a platform to discuss goals and professional development. Administrative procedures A6: Administrative Evaluation and A7: Classified Staff Evaluation detail components of the evaluation process, ensuring a comprehensive and effective assessment.

Through a multifaceted approach, EICC supports and develops knowledgeable and skilled staff who provide high-quality student support services. The college adheres to accreditation standards.

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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

3.D.1.

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) provides comprehensive student support services tailored to meet diverse needs, ensuring that all students have the resources and support necessary to succeed academically and personally.

Mental Health Services includes a full-time on-campus counselor**,** contracted mental health services, and access to a 24-hour mental health resources. These resources ensure students have continuous and comprehensive support for mental health needs, promoting a healthier, more supportive learning environment.

Basic need services recognize the broad range of challenges faced by students. Food pantries are available across campuses to alleviate food insecurity among students. The college also offers transportation assistance, which includes free bus services, making it easier for students to commute and access campus resources.

Advising for all new students during their first two semesters. This ensures students receive personalized guidance to help them navigate academic pathways and make informed decisions about their educational and career goals.

Tutoring and Skills Workshops assist students with coursework and enhance their academic skills. Workshops cover a variety of topics, including study techniques, time management, and specific academic subjects, providing students with the tools they need to excel in their studies.

Online Tools include resources such as remote proctoring, online tutoring, and accessibility tools like Read Speaker and Ally. These technologies ensure that online students have the same high-quality educational experience and support as those in traditional classroom settings.

Transitional Services focus on transfer planning and career services, preparing students for their future beyond community college. The Career Services department offers career exploration and preparation, helping students develop essential workforce skills. Transfer planning services ensure students planning to continue their education at a four-year institution receive the guidance and support necessary for a smooth transition.

Disability Services ensure that all EICC students have equitable access to education and campus resources. The disability services office assists students in identifying and accessing the support they need to succeed. This includes facilitated use of assisted technology such as software and tools that adapt the learning environment to individual needs. The office provides other essential services such as customized accommodations in testing, note-taking assistance, and special seating arrangements to create an inclusive academic environment.

TRIO Support Services assist first-generation college students, those from low-income backgrounds, and students with disabilities, helping them overcome financial, cultural, and social barriers to higher education. The program offers comprehensive services including academic tutoring, financial aid assistance, college transfer advising, and personal counseling. TRIO also provides invaluable mentorship opportunities, career guidance, and workshops to help students be successful in their academic and future career endeavors. By addressing the unique challenges faced by these student populations, the TRIO program at EICC provides students with the necessary support to complete their college education and achieve their goals.

Retention Initiative with Support & Encouragement (RISE) is a TRIO-like program that assists first-generation college students, veterans/active military, working parents, and historically excluded racial and ethnic minorities who have financial need. RISE provides additional academic support, career advising, transfer assistance, and a $1,000 stipend toward tuition and books. Each semester, RISE students participate in activities and events that help them build career skills, cultural knowledge, plan for a transfer, and more.

Library Services provide a range of materials, including books, journals, and electronic databases crucial for academic research and coursework. The library provides loaner laptops, Wi-Fi hot spots and study spaces conducive to learning. Library staff help students with research, guiding them in information literacy and in locating and using information. The library staff assist in teaching research skills and citation methods.

Through these services, EICC effectively supports students across various aspects of their educational journey, ensuring they are well-equipped to achieve their academic goals and personal development needs. The services are a vital part of the educational ecosystem at EICC.

3.D.2.

EICC uses multiple measures when placing students in college-level courses such as mathematics. Students can take the ALEKs placement exam or use their ACT math score to be placed within their first math course. ALEKs comes with practice exams and preparatory modules to give students practice problems before and after taking the ALEKs exam. Students may take the ALEKs exam more than once to improve their scores to be placed within another course.

Another mathematics support is the corequisite course for statistics. If students score within a certain set of parameters through ALEKs, students can enroll in college-level statistics with the corequisite support course.

Students who need additional support in reading and writing are encouraged to enroll in an Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), which pairs a college composition class with a developmental writing class. This model implemented at EICC in 2018, continues to be supported by English department faculty and administration.

In Summer 2024, English Language Learning (ELL) worked with the English as a Second Language (ESL) department to request additional time on exams. Using the Combined English Language Skills Assessment**,** the ESL faculty coordinator can evaluate a student's language skills and determine the level of support. This is an optional support mechanism available to all ELL students.

EICC's new student orientation can be attended in person at any campus or online through the learning management system. At orientation, students learn about support services like counseling, advising, disability services, financial aid, tutoring, library, student engagement, and more. They can also tour the campus and engage with different departments.

Tutoring services at EICC are comprehensive and accessible. Students can receive tutoring on campus, virtually via Zoom**,** and through BrainFuse, a tool integrated into their Canvas learning management system. The college provides writing consultations and specialized math tutoring, ensuring students receive focused assistance in these critical areas. All tutoring services are free to students, reinforcing EICC's commitment to supporting student success.

EICC offers a College Experience course. It covers student outcomes, campus resources, library skills, computer resources, and identifying and evaluating responsibilities as college students.

3.D.3.

EICC academic advising is a case load model in which advisors build relationships with a diverse student population. New students must meet with their advisor to discuss career and academic goals, which are integral to student retention and completion. These relationships help students feel like they belong, and that they can reach out when unexpected situations arise or whenever they need assistance. To accommodate student schedules, EICC offers multiple modalities for advising, including in person, Zoom, or phone. EICC also has advisors assigned to specific programs. For example, PACE (Pathways for Academic Career Education) Career Navigators provide services and support to aid students in selecting academic and career

pathways that lead to gainful, quality, in-state employment. PACE Navigators cover large academic areas including information technology, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, transportation, and logistics.

Advisors use Dropout Detective software to identify students who are at risk or need more support. Through this system, advisors and faculty can collaboratively identify and communicate what, if any, additional resources the student needs. Advisors also use Signal Vine, a texting platform, to reach out and update students on important dates and events.

3.D.4.

EICC's significant investments in infrastructure and resources support effective teaching and learning across disciplines. These investments ensure students and instructors have the latest technology and facilities for their academic and professional development.

A few examples include:

Campus Infrastructure and Facilities:

- The 2021 Bond Projects, including the Clinton, DeWitt and Muscatine Career Advancement Centers (CAC), and an enhanced Health Sciences Center, represent a $37 million investment and significant expansion of the college's physical infrastructure.
- The 2018 Urban Campus Project, a $29 million investment, expanded EICC's presence into the Quad Cities urban core.
- EICC invested $3 million in the CCC and MCC libraries, reinforcing the critical role of libraries in academic research and learning.
- The college invested $225,000 in the SCC Black Box Theatre, providing students with a professional space for theatrical productions.

Program and Academic Enhancements:

- CTE Program Review annually allocates $200,000 for equipment, supporting career and technical education with the latest tools and technologies.
- Canvas, a $250,000 annual investment, modernizes the institution's e-learning capabilities, facilitating a flexible and interactive learning experience.
- LinkedIn Learning, a $100,000 investment, expands EICC's educational resources and provides students and faculty with an array of quality content and professional development courses.
- The college annually allocates $225,000 in Perkins funds for CTE program equipment, tools, and technologies.

- From the college's Plant Fund, $200,000 is focused on enhancements to program equipment and facilities.

Technology Upgrades:

- EICC invested $40,000 in the Cybersecurity & Networking computer lab to upgrade equipment and enhance the learning experience.

- A $60,000 investment in a student data center provides additional learning experiences in Cybersecurity.

- The college spent $12 million on IT upgrades in the last 13 years, including enhancing Wi-Fi, showcasing a long-term commitment to robust technological infrastructure.

- EICC's Additive Manufacturing program acquired 3-D printing equipment; a cutting-edge addition that fosters student innovation and creativity.

Strategic investments in infrastructure, technology, and resources reflect the college's holistic approach to supporting teaching and learning. By fostering a state-of-the-art learning environment, EICC enhances educational outcomes and prepares students for the demands of the modern workforce.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) ensures quality academic offerings through a structured process that maintains program currency and rigor. This process includes:

- Collaborating with the Iowa Department of Education to approve new courses and programs, ensuring they meet academic standards and community needs.
- Using EICC's Course Development Model (CDM) to standardize course content, learning outcomes, and instructional quality across all delivery modalities.
- Curriculum proposal review and vetting by EICC's Educational Programs, Policy, and Curriculum Council (EPC) to ensure rigor and alignment with transfer standards and workforce needs.

EICC articulates and differentiates learning goals for each credential level through a structured framework encompassing outcomes tied to critical thinking, industry standards, and expected student proficiency. The college fosters continuous improvement through robust assessment processes, co-curricular assessments, and participation in the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy. This multi-tiered approach supports continuous assessment and improvement, ensuring students achieve the necessary skills and knowledge tailored to their educational paths.

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

4.A.1.

Program Reviews at EICC:

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) conducts comprehensive program reviews to ensure the quality and relevance of its academic offerings. These reviews encompass both Arts and Sciences disciplines and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, following a structured four-year cycle as mandated by Board Policy 613. This policy requires regular evaluation of programs concerning course content and standards, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with educational goals.

Arts and Sciences Program Review:

Arts and Sciences program reviews at EICC are thorough, data-driven, and span several days. Faculty participate in large group meetings for training, expectation setting, FAQs, and supported work time. During these reviews, faculty examine all discipline Course Development Models (CDMs), data, and assessment outcomes compiled through a self-study and the CDM Curriculog process. This review process fosters communication among faculty, promotes data analysis leading to curriculum updates, addresses faculty needs, and identifies new instructional approaches and activities.

General Education Review:

The General Education Review is part of the Arts and Sciences review cycle. A subcommittee of faculty and staff reviews data on all general education courses, including comparisons with surrounding community colleges, transferable courses to regent universities, and alignment with the Liaison Advisory Committee on Transfer Students (LACTS) agreement. The subcommittee also examines success rates of general education courses. Through these discussions, the subcommittee made several recommendations, including the introduction of a new math course, a new process for approving general education courses, and the consolidation of two general education pools into one. These recommendations were presented to the Educational Programs, Policy, and Curriculum Council (EPC), Academic Leadership Council (ALC), and the Board, and were subsequently implemented for future academic years.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Review:

EICC's CTE Program Review is a year-long, intensive, and data-informed process designed to foster program innovation and excellence. It begins with a program self-study conducted by department faculty, who identify technology and facility needs, review course content, and update each Course Development Model (CDM). The self-study and supporting documents are posted in EICConnect Self-Service Portal and are accessible to all review team members, including faculty, department coordinators, peer team members, and administrators.

The peer review team, which includes Arts and Science faculty, CTE faculty, administrators, a marketing team member, and student services staff, provides an external perspective. They visit the program site to conduct evaluations**,** complete a peer review report based on their observations, and interview students and program employees. Using the feedback from the peer review team's report and the department's self-study, the supervising dean and coordinator develop an action plan.

Information collected during the review process is used to develop future-oriented action plans and allocate funding for updating equipment and technologies. These action plans, essential for continued alignment with workforce needs, are reviewed by divisional deans. An example of this process is the Accounting and Business Professional programs presenting their action plans to the Academic Leadership Council. Additionally, the curriculum coordinator and director for strategic initiatives and assessment meet with program leads in the second and third years to discuss progress, short- and long-term goals, and required assistance. This plan is then discussed with the EPC, ALC, and the program's advisory committee to ensure comprehensive feedback and continuous improvement.

Assessment Committees:

In 2020, EICC joined the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy with four primary goals: train faculty and staff in the basics of outcomes assessment**;** develop program-level outcomes for all discipline areas, programs, and departments; map program-level outcomes to institutional-level outcomes; and develop assessment tools to measure outcomes. Over four years, faculty, staff, and administrators collaborated to establish these processes, which are managed by the Outcomes Assessment Committee (OAC) and the HLC Assessment Academy Committee (HLCAA).

The OAC, primarily composed of faculty and staff, meets monthly to propose professional development topics, assessment policies, and goals, which are then reviewed by the HLCAA. The OAC also examines yearly assessment best practices, helps plan assessment days, and brings forth assessment suggestions. Meanwhile, the HLCAA, established during EICC's entry into the HLC Assessment Academy, focuses on setting and reflecting on assessment goals and tools, integrating these into the program review process.

Program-Level Accreditation:

Program-level accreditation assists EICC in maintaining the highest standards for its programs. These accreditations ensure that the college's offerings are rigorously reviewed, aligned with industry standards, and benchmarked against similar programs at other colleges and universities. By adhering to the criteria set forth by accrediting bodies, EICC can guarantee its programs are relevant and meet the evolving needs of the workforce. The college holds several program-level accreditations, which enhance the credibility and recognition of its programs and foster continuous improvement and excellence.

4.A.2

EICC employs a comprehensive approach to evaluate all the credit within transcripts, ensuring consistency and academic integrity. This includes credit awarded for experiential learning and other forms of prior learning.

EICC's policy for transferring credits from accredited higher education institutions is clearly outlined in the Catalog and on the college website. Once a student submits a Request for Transcript Evaluation form, EICC registrars utilize the Transfer in Iowa website and collaborate with faculty program coordinators to assess the transfer credit.

EICC recognizes various forms of college-level learning. Credit for prior learning can be obtained via an application process, Advanced Placement (AP) exams, College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams**,** Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES DSST), military credit**,** or a prior learning assessment portfolio.

College credit may be awarded for satisfactory scores on standardized tests such as AP, CLEP, and DANTES. The college maintains scoring standards for these tests in alignment with the LACTS Agreement. Official college transcripts received via mail or electronically through the

National Student Clearinghouse are reviewed by the registrar. Accepted transfer work is then processed through the Colleague student information system, and students are notified of their awarded credits via email. They can also review their course equivalents through EICConnect**.**

The college utilizes the American Council of Education's (ACE) Guide for evaluating military training and awarding credit, which is combined with the Joint Services Transcript (JST). EICC is proactive in supporting military students. For example, it hosted an ACE Military Evaluation Program event aimed at enhancing understanding of the JST and expanding opportunities for military students to earn college credit.

The college also accepts international transfer credits. All international transcripts must be evaluated by one of the foreign transcript evaluation services listed on EICC's website. Upon receiving the foreign transcript evaluation and a Transcript Evaluation Request from the student, registrars use the course-by-course evaluation with credit hours to determine credit transfers.

The Catalog and Student Handbook detail the acceptance of credits for previous education and work experience, ensuring alignment with HLC Assumed Practices.

4.A.3.

EICC registrars are members of the Upper Midwest Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (UMACRAO) and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)**.** They utilize best practices from both organizations to create policies and procedures for EICC.

EICC adheres to the Iowa Liaison Advisory Committee on Transfer Students (LACTS) agreement, which outlines transfer among Iowa public institutions of higher education. In addition, all the community colleges in the state use a common course numbering system across disciplines for further transferability.

EICC's registrars utilize transfer forms, procedures, manuals, and meet monthly to discuss updates, questions, and changes with key offices. Registrars consult with discipline-specific faculty to discuss potential new transfer-in courses. Faculty review course descriptions, syllabi, and outcomes to ensure standards are met. The registrars adhere to the Department of Education accredited school list to allow credits from other schools to transfer into EICC.

The director of strategic initiatives and assessment utilizes the AACRAO Guide to Best Practices: Articulation Agreements when working with other institutions. The director also works with deans, faculty, content experts, and articulation leads at all institutions to create agreements that transfer among all colleges.

4.A.4.

Authority and Rigor of Courses:

EICC has comprehensive administrative policies to ensure the authority and rigor of its courses and programs. Administrative Policy C14 outlines the procedures for academic program planning, which include establishing new Transfer Majors and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, program modifications, student learning outcomes, and course prerequisites. This policy ensures any changes or additions to programs and courses are meticulously reviewed for the potential impact on student learning outcomes and academic rigor.

Curriculum Approval and Management:

EICC is responsible for establishing, evaluating, and modifying instructional programs. The quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of programs undergo a rigorous review and approval process. The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) oversees this process via the State of Iowa Curriculum System (STICS), a web-based application where colleges submit new course and program approvals, as well as modifications to existing ones. New program submissions are reviewed by the Iowa Community College Chief Academic Officers committee. This structured environment ensures compliance with state and federal laws and accreditation standards.

EICC employs Curriculog, a web-based proposal management system, to oversee the curriculum approval and editing processes, ensuring best practices in course changes, prerequisites, corequisites, learning outcomes, and expectations. The workflow involves divisions, deans, registrars, financial aid officers, the assessment director, the Educational Policies Committee (EPC), and the Academic Leadership Council (ALC), who review and approve changes.

First, EICC's Course Development Model (CDM), detailed in Criterion 3A1, defines the structure and content of each course, including titles, credit and contact hours, prerequisites, corequisites, descriptions, and learning outcomes. Faculty craft each CDM to meet academic standards and industry expectations. Once approved, the CDM becomes the template for developing syllabi, ensuring consistency and quality across all course sections and delivery modalities.

Then, the Educational Programs, Policy, and Curriculum Council (EPC) reviews and approves all new courses, modifications, and program developments. Comprised of faculty, staff, and curriculum experts, the council vets all curriculum proposals for academic rigor, alignment with industry standards, and workforce needs. This structured and collaborative process ensures EICC's curricular offerings remain current, relevant, and prepare students for future success.

Concurrent Programs:

To maintain the quality of concurrent programs, EICC uses the same CDM across the district, which ensures learning outcomes are clearly articulated on the Simple Syllabus for each course. Concurrent faculty adhere to a best practice and expectation checklist and participate in ongoing professional development. The faculty liaison and concurrent instructor (CCI) follow a comprehensive handbook and the same academic standards, ensuring learning outcomes and achievement levels in concurrent courses match EICC's higher education curriculum.

Faculty Qualifications and Professional Development:

Faculty qualifications at EICC are governed by Administrative Policy C20, which outlines the Quality Faculty Plan (QFP), record-keeping practices, and the QFP committee's role in maintaining faculty standards. All faculty teaching credit courses, regardless of modality or location, meet state-standard qualifications, which are reviewed and recorded by their respective deans.

EICC is accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), ensuring that all concurrent enrollment instructors meet the qualifications required for teaching on campus. NACEP's Faculty 1 (F1) standard requires EICC's concurrent faculty to undergo the same rigorous training and meet the same qualifications as their on-campus counterparts.

Learning Resources and Support:

EICC provides extensive resources to support teaching and learning. Faculty have access to the Instructor Resource Center, the Center for Teaching and Learning site, and the Assessment Resource module in Canvas, which offer a range of articles, how-to videos, and best practice training.

Students can access learning resources on campus and virtually, including within any Canvas course under the Student Resources tab. Tutoring services are available on each campus, via Zoom, and online through Brainfuse, ensuring all students, regardless of their mode of study, have access to the support they need.

EICC exercises stringent control over course prerequisites, rigor, student learning expectations, and faculty qualifications. Through comprehensive administrative policies, robust curriculum management systems, and continuous professional development, EICC ensures all courses maintain the highest standards of academic excellence and consistency.

4.A.5.

EICC is accredited by the state of Iowa and upholds rigorous state standards on faculty qualifications, faculty load, Career and Technical Education (CTE) program evaluation, strategic planning, physical plant and facilities, Quality Faculty Plans, and the Senior Year Plus program.

EICC is also accredited through the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP). This accreditation guarantees that all concurrent courses maintain high standards and rigor through established policies and best practices. NACEP accreditation standards include categories of partnerships, curriculum, faculty, students, assessment, and program evaluation. A significant portion of EICC's enrollment is concurrent students, reflecting the importance of this accreditation.

Additionally, EICC holds specialized accreditation for numerous programs, which include:

- Automotive Technology - Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)
- Diesel Technology - Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)

- Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning - HVAC Excellence
- Nursing - Iowa Board of Nursing (IBON)
- Dental Assisting - The Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)
- Heath Information Management - Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM): (Associated with AHIMA)
- Cancer Information Management - National Cancer Registrars Association (NCRA)
- Radiology Technician - Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Education (JRCERT)
- Surgical Technology - Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA): (Associated with CAAHEP)
- Paramedic - Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions (CoAEMSP): (Associated with CEEHEP)
- Veterinary Technician AVMA Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities (CVTEA)

The accreditation status of these programs is documented on the EICC website, with updated accreditation letters available through the curriculum office. Accreditation is valued by the college, as is the accreditation process. It allows EICC to review best practices, assess programs and services, and continually drive improvements.

The Diesel Technician program underwent the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) accreditation process in 2023. This included an on-site visit by ASE representatives in October, who were peer reviewers from other educational institutions and local employers. They assessed the program against ASE's industry-recognized standards**,** including curriculum quality, student support services, institutional support, and partnerships with local stakeholders. In April 2024, ASE confirmed that the Diesel Technician program met all standards and was reaccredited through April 2029.

EICC leverages its program-specific, state, and NACEP accreditations to ensure compliance with established standards and to benchmark against other institutions. By maintaining these high standards, EICC not only upholds the quality of its educational offerings but also fosters an environment of continuous growth and excellence, benefiting both students and the broader community.

4.A.6.

Evaluating Graduate Success:

EICC conducts focused evaluations to ensure that its programs effectively prepare students for further education or careers. Using specific indicators aligned with the college's mission, the institution comprehensively assesses program outcomes.

Graduate Surveys:

Graduate Surveys are a key tool in gathering detailed student feedback on the educational experience, including the quality of academics, career readiness, and support services' effectiveness. Tailored to each program, these surveys provide essential insights into how well the curriculum prepares students for post-graduation life.

For Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, in-depth surveys collect input from graduates, employers, and advisory councils. This feedback is vital for curriculum updates and program enhancements, ensuring EICC's CTE programs meet industry standards and job market demands.

For Arts and Sciences programs, graduate surveys play a crucial role in assessing student success and preparedness for further education. The surveys conducted in academic year 2024 will offer additional analysis, particularly focusing on large enrollment Transfer Majors, to further understand the Transfer Major impact on successful transfer.

Advisory Councils:

CTE program advisory councils consist of local K-12 teachers, industry partners, business leaders, state officials, and more. These councils evaluate graduates' employability and workforce readiness. Through clinicals, work-based learning, and on-the-job training, advisory councils and partners provide feedback on course outcomes and training, aligning them with real-world needs.

Benchmarking and External Resources:

To benchmark graduate success against broader trends, the college uses external resources like the Iowa Department of Education State Outcomes Dashboard and the Board of Regent Community College Transfer Dashboard. These platforms offer comprehensive data on graduation rates, job placements, and other key success indicators, helping position EICC's programs within the wider educational and economic context. Comparative data from other community colleges is also utilized.

The Iowa Board of Regent Community College Transfer Report provides detailed metrics on credit hours completed, GPA earned, and retention and graduation rates by area of study for EICC's transfer students. Additionally, the institution employs the National Student Clearinghouse to track the transfer paths of recent graduates.

Articulation Agreements and Transfer Student Success:

EICC places significant emphasis on assessing the success of transfer students. The college regularly reviews and evaluates articulation agreements to ensure smooth transitions for students moving to four-year institutions. The Iowa Liaison Advisory Committee on Transfer Students (LACTS) plays a crucial role in this process. LACTS fosters relationships and facilitates statewide agreements that form the foundation for credit transfer, ensuring they meet academic standards and effectively prepare students for advanced studies. Additionally, the statewide effort to establish Transfer Majors ensures transfer requirements align, further supporting academic success and seamless integration into the receiving institutions.

Program-Specific Feedback and Assessment:

In addition to the program-specific feedback mechanisms outlined above, EICC monitors licensure and certification pass rates for its accredited programs and uses pre-testing assessment data to identify and address gaps in student readiness. This systematic, data-informed approach ensures the institution's programs meet academic standards and market demands, fulfilling its mission to equip graduates for future success.

For example, the radiologic technology program has consistently met or exceeded pass rate standards for program accreditation. Students prepare for certification exams through practice scenarios, labs, and course questions. The program utilizes assessment data to identify areas needing re-teaching and emphasis throughout the curriculum.

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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

4.B.1.

To maintain a consistent and comprehensive approach to assessment, EICC has developed a standard process for regular review and evaluation. The annual assessment plan is the cornerstone of this effort.

Annual Assessment Plan:

The Annual Assessment Plan at EICC is a dynamic document that outlines the institution's commitment to systematic assessment. It includes:

- **Assessment goals:** Clear objectives that guide the assessment process for the year.
- **Review schedule:** Timelines for assessing various programs and courses.
- **Tracking processes:** Methods for monitoring student performance and institutional effectiveness.
- **Rubrics and committees:** Detailed rubrics for evaluating learning outcomes and the formation of assessment committees.
- **Documentation:** Comprehensive records of assessments and outcomes.

The plan is reviewed each year by academic leadership, the Outcomes Assessment Committee, and the dean of students who oversees co-curricular assessment. The plan is then added to the assessment webpage and the Canvas Assessment course as guidance for all faculty, staff, and administration.

Institutional Learning Outcomes:

In Fall 2019, EICC began integrating the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) LEAP Goals into its assessment program, drawing from the VALUE rubrics. This initiative involved significant faculty participation in creating and refining these rubrics, ensuring they were tailored to meet the specific needs and contexts of EICC.

The teamwork rubric emphasizes collaborative skills and the ability to work effectively in diverse groups, while the critical thinking rubric focuses on analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information to make informed decisions. The DEI rubric aims to foster an inclusive environment by assessing students' understanding and appreciation of diverse perspectives and their ability to engage respectfully with others. Building on this foundation, EICC plans to develop a fourth rubric in 2024, centered on problem-solving. This rubric will be crafted with substantial faculty input, continuing the tradition of collaborative development and ensuring the assessment tools remain relevant and effective in measuring key competencies.

Student Learning Outcomes:

EICC piloted the student learning outcome process during the 2021-2022 academic year. Faculty participated in a three-step process: setting assessment goals**,** providing outcome data**,** and conducting yearly reflections. Each step played a crucial role in achieving outcome goals and gathering data each semester. By 2022-2023, all full-time faculty utilized a standardized data collection tool to assess at least one class, uploading the data to the Assessment Canvas Course for comprehensive data collection.

Faculty continue to utilize the standardized data collection process each fall and spring semester, and complete a reflection survey to think about assessment and curriculum changes for the next school year. EICC continues to collect data through assessment, trend data discussions,during assessment days and in department meetings.

The nursing program exemplifies the effective implementation of processes to achieve assessment goals. Utilizing the Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) platform for supplemental, integrated, and National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) preparation instruction, students are required to take proctored exams in specialty areas to demonstrate their competency levels. This allows faculty to tailor remediation and develop supplemental instruction and content policies, ensuring students stay on track to pass the NCLEX on their first attempt.

After a two-year rollout, the nursing program recently graduated its first cohort that experienced full ATI integration. While EICC does not yet have official NCLEX results for this group, approximately 75% of the students who graduated in June and July 2023 have self-reported passing on their first attempt.

Program Learning Outcomes:

Program learning outcomes are developed using curriculum mapping spreadsheets and documented in the college catalog. These outcomes are included in each self-study report and reviewed during the program review cycle and whenever program changes are made.

On Assessment Day in January 2024, part of the professional development time was dedicated to reviewing curriculum maps with divisions across the district.

Arts and Sciences and CTE programs scheduled for review in the 2023-2024 academic year held work sessions to edit Course Development Models (CDMs), incorporate program learning outcome data, revise student and program learning outcomes based on initial data, review course data, and create action plans using the self-study report.

Professional Development:

EICC places a strong emphasis on professional development to support the assessment process. Regular assessment days, the Assessment Canvas resource module, and Fall Development Day sessions offer faculty opportunities to enhance their assessment skills. Topics covered include the creation of assessment tools and rubrics, storytelling through assessment, and addressing general assessment queries. These sessions are meticulously planned by the director of strategic initiatives and assessment, the Academic Leadership Council (ALC), the Outcomes Assessment Committee, and are informed by feedback from assessment day surveys.

Co-Curricular Assessment:

EICC's co-curricular assessment process is designed to ensure that student development programs effectively contribute to the institution's overall learning goals. Adopting the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in Higher Education goals, EICC has established a framework that aligns with the LEAP goals, creating a cohesive assessment strategy. This alignment is clearly outlined in the annual assessment plan, providing a comprehensive overview of how co-curricular activities support broader educational objectives.

To enhance the co-curricular assessment process, departments have begun to identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor trend data over time, facilitating data-driven decisions to refine and improve processes. In the 2023-2024 academic year, a pilot program was launched involving three key student development departments: mental health, career services, and advising. Each department is tasked with assessing CAS standards and student outcome goals through pre- and post-surveys, demonstrating how their efforts connect to EICC's strategic plan.

As part of this pilot program, the Career Services department is focusing on the CAS standard of knowledge acquisition, construction, integration, and application, which corresponds to the LEAP goal of understanding human cultures and the physical and natural world. By collecting survey data and testimonials throughout the academic year, Career Services aims to show the impact of its programs on students' career readiness and personal development.

EICC plans to expand this assessment model to all student development programs in the 2024-2025 academic year. Each program will complete pre- and post-assessment forms that link CAS standards, LEAP goals, and the strategic plan to their specific outcomes and data analysis. This approach will ensure that all co-curricular activities are systematically evaluated and continuously improved, fostering an environment where student development is closely monitored and aligned with institutional objectives.

4.B.2.

The college employs multiple methods to utilize information gained from assessments to enhance student learning. Faculty use assessment data to determine if and what curriculum changes are needed. They leverage student survey feedback and assessment data to implement changes that support student learning. Below are two programs that illustrate how curriculum and teaching techniques are informed by assessment data.

Surgical Technology Program:

The Surgical Technology program uses assessment data from program-specific certification and licensure reports to improve student learning processes. At the end of each cohort cycle, all students take a certification exam. The program director reviews the results to identify areas where students underperformed. They also compare the accreditation test plan with the exam results and curriculum. Faculty then create new strategies to help students in weaker areas, significantly improving their performance on the certification exam. The success of these strategies is documented in the program review report**.**

Veterinary Technician Program:

The Veterinary Technician program uses data from the Veterinary Technicians National Exam (VTNE), which covers nine domains. Student scores are calculated in each domain to help faculty pinpoint areas needing improvement. EICC had previously struggled with imaging and lab procedures. To address this, a new instructor with expertise in these domains was hired two years ago and the implementation of the flipped classroom technique has led to higher student scores in the pharmacology domain. EICC VTNE scores have improved for first-time takers compared to the national average in 2019 and 2023.

Action Plans from Program Review:

Each program undergoes a review process where departments create action plans based on past data reflections and assessment processes. These plans may involve changes to curriculum, policies and procedures, equipment, and student support. For example, the action plan created for the Diesel Technology program included changes to the curriculum.

Co-Curricular:

In fall 2023, the co-curricular pilot team conducted pre- and post-surveys to summarize findings, develop plans based on the data, and align outcomes with LEAP goals, CAS standards, and the strategic plan. During future assessment days, various departments will share their data, plans, and best practices. This post-assessment process allows departments to reflect on changes to the assessment tools and/or departmental practices. An example of pre-assessment and reflection on post-assessment results is the EICC Gaming Convention. Feedback from participants led to the creation of new events for the next convention and extending the length of the convention. Survey results prompted revisions of some questions and the addition of new questions to gather more comprehensive feedback in future surveys.

4.B.3

Faculty and Staff Assessment Committees and Teams:

EICC has elevated the role assessment plays in its culture and district goals. It joined the HLC Assessment Academy, then formed the EICC HLC Assessment Academy Committee. Administrators and faculty created four goals:

- Faculty and staff will be trained in the basics of outcomes assessment.
- Program-level outcomes for all discipline areas, programs, and departments will be developed.
- Program-level outcomes will be mapped to institutional-level outcomes.
- Assessment tools that will measure outcomes will be developed.

To review EICC's progress through the four goals, the 6.0 and 7.0 updates in the assessment academy progression helped track progress and reflection on assessment processes. Through the four goals, professional development assessment days were used to showcase best practices of assessment, how to create an assessment tool, how to utilize the common district assessment data collection spreadsheet, and the new EICC assessment steps. In addition, program review and additional assessment professional development days defined program-level outcomes, how to create them, and how they connect to student learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes.

The college's HLC Assessment Academy committee meets monthly to discuss progress and additional training and create action plans to achieve all goals. In addition, the Outcomes Assessment Committee meets monthly to plan annual training, review data, and identify ways to spread the culture of assessment. This committee includes faculty and staff from multiple areas.

Faculty and administrators participate in HLC's Assessing General Education workshop which further enriches EICC's approach. The team continues to collaborate and discuss variables impacting general education assessment, review the district's general education assessment processes, explore more efficient ways to measure general education assessment data, and lead changes in general education.

Professional Development:

EICC holds assessment workshops each year**.** Faculty review best practices, assessment processes, data analysis, storytelling through data, and more. In 2023, student services staff began attending the October and March workshops to learn about, and begin shaping, their own co-curricular assessments.

During the March 2024 assessment day**,** faculty and staff met on campus to learn about various assessment topics from multiple speakers across the district. The General Education Assessing

team presented what they learned in the HLC workshop, best practices to implement, and goals to gain more data insights to assess student learning. In addition, other sessions included presentations by:

- The dean of E-learning on the role of EICC's new instructional designer in curriculum and course content.
- A science faculty member on how to utilize rubrics and processes on choosing institutional learning outcomes for courses
- The deans of students and the director of strategic initiatives on best co-curricular assessment practices.
- The chief communications officer on the results of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE).

National Surveys:

EICC conducts three University of Texas at Austin surveys: Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE,) and Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE). All are research-based and provide national benchmarks.

SENSE offers a comprehensive understanding of students' actions and behaviors during the initial weeks of a term and college practices that impact students during this pivotal period. EICC has administered SENSE since 2012, and most recently in Fall 2023 which included two special focus models on Mental Health and Guided Pathways.

CCSSE provides insight into student engagement, a critical gauge of learning. The survey evaluates college practices and student actions that strongly correlate with learning and retention. EICC has administered CCSSE since 2008 and most recently in Spring 2023, which also included special focus models on Guided Pathways and Mental Health.

EICC added CCFSSE in Spring 2023 as a companion survey to CCSSE. It allows faculty to contribute insight into student engagement and perceptions regarding teaching practices. The combination of the CCFSSE and the CCSSE allows EICC to compare student perception of their behaviors and engagement, and faculty perception of the same.

All survey results are shared, analyzed, and widely discussed within academic and student development areas. EICC has utilized various components as measures within the Strategic Plan.

Course Surveys:

EICC uses the Blue application tool from the ICCOC consortium to provide course evaluations**.** Blue is an end-of-course survey tool that provides student feedback to faculty. Survey questions were collaboratively created by faculty and administrators. Evaluations are deployed 10 days before the course ends. Faculty receive the results two weeks after grades are due. Each faculty member can apply the results and feedback into future course offerings.

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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

4.C1.

Improving student retention, persistence, and completion are priority goals within EICC's 2021 Strategic Plan, and for the past few years, those concerns were discussed and addressed through program-level action plans. The college recognized a comprehensive approach would be more effective. In Spring 2024, EICC established the Strategic Enrollment Management and Retention Committee (SEMaR) to lead comprehensive efforts to increase enrollment, retention, and completion.

SEMaR:

Utilizing a collaborative process, SEMaR depends on stakeholder input, data utilization, and the active engagement of subgroups focused on specific priorities.

The committee has nine subcommittees:

- Admissions and outreach
- Co-curricular and engagement
- Concurrent enrollment
- Course success

- Data and analytics
- Equity and inclusion
- Financial support
- Policy and procedures
- Strategic communications

Each subcommittee meets throughout the semester to work on their specific goals and collaborate on shared objectives. Monthly meetings are held to discuss progress, gather feedback, and analyze data. Additionally, each subcommittee produces regular progress reports.

In the coming year, SEMaR will set clear, defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion. It will also outline tactics and create action plans.

Strategic Plans:

In the 2021-2025 strategic plan, EICC identified four major priorities: student success, enrollment, equity, and innovation. Each included multiple objectives to emphasize retention, persistence, and completion. Examples include:

- Help students overcome barriers to success.
- Increase student engagement.
- Implement a comprehensive retention plan.
- Expand online programming and support services.
- Expansion of CTE programs through Career Academies with pathways to post-secondary enrollment.
- Build strong pipeline from the community and K-12s to EICC.
- Close achievement gaps among different demographic groups.

Program Review Process:

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) program review includes a comprehensive retention analysis for each program. This highlights the strengths of each program and equips faculty with extensive data. Faculty use it to develop targeted strategies aimed at enhancing retention and completion rates within their programs.

During the self-study phase, faculty and staff reflect on their data and make thoughtful recommendations to improve student outcomes. This reflective process ensures strategies are well-informed and aligned with program and college goals.

The peer team visit**,** and subsequent report, provide valuable input from a broader group of stakeholders. This feedback provides diverse perspectives and ensures goals and strategies are robust and comprehensive. The peer team phase also provides opportunities for cross-departmental collaborations.

Based on the insights gained from the program review, self-study, and peer team reports, programs develop detailed action plans. These plans include specific recommendations for curriculum improvements, support services, and other initiatives aimed at boosting student retention, persistence, and completion.

Reports and Analysis:

EICC regularly reviews comprehensive Fall to Spring and Fall to Fall retention reports to identify areas requiring attention. Analysis of these reports revealed a gap in online student retention, prompting the college to take targeted actions. Specific advisors were assigned to online programs and online-exclusive students to provide enhanced support and guidance. Furthermore, the college made improvements to the online student resource center**,** promoted online tutoring resources, and offered virtual advising.

In addition to retention reports, the college utilizes the course success report to examine differences across various delivery modalities. By focusing on high-enrollment courses, the college can address issues that could challenge student success and ensure all courses are conducive to achieving educational goals.

The college also leverages the IPEDS 150% graduation report, which segments the cohort by race, ethnicity, gender, program, college campus, delivery method, and age. This report provides critical metrics to evaluate graduation success, set targets, and identify achievement gaps. By analyzing each segment, EICC can pinpoint areas where interventions are needed. Student involvement initiatives such as the Black Student Union and LULAC continue to be instrumental in addressing and closing achievement gaps among underrepresented student populations, leading to a more equitable educational environment. These efforts reflect the college's commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion, enhancing the success of all students.

4.C.2.

The institution systematically collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs through various detailed reports and data compilations. The Institutional Research (IR) department is central to this effort, producing an annual Fact Book that includes essential sections on student profiles, enrollments, and outcomes across Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC).

IR Annual Reports:

In addition to the Fact Book, the IR department generates comprehensive Retention Reports for Fall to Fall and Fall to Spring periods, Course Completion Analysis, and a 150% Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) graduation report. These reports are crucial for internal assessment and planning, fostering insightful discussions within retention committees. To ensure widespread accessibility and engagement, these reports are extensively disseminated, shared via professional development workshops and posted on SharePoint, facilitating data-informed decision-making and strategic planning.

CTE Program Review:

The IR department also plays a pivotal role in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Review, which captures detailed program-level data on student retention and completion within specific CTE programs. This analysis provides a granular view of student progress and success rates in career-focused programs. Furthermore, the college utilizes the State Outcomes Dashboard to compare program-level graduation rates and outcomes with those of other Iowa Community Colleges, offering valuable insights for continuous improvement. Additionally, the review process includes surveying students, graduates, and advisory councils, which shape conversations around retention and completion by incorporating diverse perspectives and feedback.

Voluntary Framework of Accountability:

The college also leverages the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) dashboards and reports to assess completion, outcomes, and progress. The VFA provides opportunities to benchmark against other colleges and utilizes defined cohorts for more accurate comparisons. By examining credit hour thresholds, the VFA offers essential context for academic planning, particularly for EICC's growing part-time student population. Additionally, developmental pathway data from the VFA have been instrumental for task forces in evaluating and refining placement and advising practices.

SENSE and CCSSE Surveys:

The college utilizes the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to gather valuable insights into student engagement and experiences. These surveys provide detailed information on various aspects of the student journey, from initial entry to ongoing academic involvement. The data collected from SENSE and CCSSE inform institutional strategies aimed at enhancing student engagement, retention, and overall success. By analyzing the feedback from these surveys, EICC can identify strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring student voices are central to the development of supportive and effective educational practices.

Strategic Plan:

Additionally, the Strategic Plan outlines quantitative parameters approved by the Senior Leadership and IR teams, with qualitative components providing further details and charts.

Faculty, staff, and administrators contribute to the summaries that accompany this data, ensuring a comprehensive approach to understanding and enhancing student success.

4.C.3

EICC utilizes data on student retention, persistence, and program completion to drive necessary improvements. The institution has undertaken several key projects through its Retention and Completion committees to remove barriers and enhance student success.

These projects include:

- Revamping New Student Orientation with an improved schedule and resource fair.
- Creation of new, user-friendly, branded materials for orientation.
- Overhauling the Financial Aid Appeals process.
- Setting up food pantries/sharing shelves at all locations.
- Providing additional student technology resources starting with COVID-19.
- Enabling students to check out hotspots or laptops from campus libraries.
- Wi-Fi access points were provided in campus parking lots.
- Proactive communication plan using texting.

Program Review and Data Utilization:

Departments at EICC work closely with the IR team, external data, advisory councils and stakeholders to review data and inform program improvements. This includes reviewing enrollment, course success, retention, and graduation rates. The data informs the program review process, action plans, and program improvements.

Nursing Program Improvements

The Nursing program at EICC exemplifies the effective use of data to drive improvements.

Data Sources Utilized:

- CTE Program Review
- Mountain Measurement from National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBON)
- Course success reports

- National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) Nursing Board pass rate
- Iowa Board of Nursing (IBON) recommendations
- Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) reports

Targeted Improvements:

- Purchased simulators and realigned faculty loads to enhance simulation.
- Implemented a mentoring program impacting student retention.
- Increased state Board pass rates through targeted efforts.

District-Wide Retention and Enrollment Committee (SEMaR)

In Spring 2024, EICC established a district-wide retention and enrollment committee, including faculty, staff, and administrators from various divisions.

Organization and Focus:

- Committee organized into nine subcommittees focusing on specific topics related to retention and enrollment.
- Met through February and March to discuss charges, goals, and membership.
- On-going emphasis on the importance of retention and enrollment.
- Establishment of clear goals and metrics.

EICC's strategic use of data and feedback drives continuous improvement, ensuring student retention, persistence, and completion remain at the forefront of institutional efforts.

4.C. 4.

The college exercises high standards in collecting and analyzing data related to student retention, persistence, and completion, as evidenced through its active participation in key research and data analysis groups. EICC employs best practices in institutional research, as reinforced by its membership in the Association of Institutional Researchers and the Iowa Community College Association of Institutional Researchers. This regional collaboration allows for the sharing of methodologies and findings, enhancing the college's ability to refine its data collection and analysis. Similarly, participation in the State MIS Council and the Iowa Department of Education Data Review team provides valuable insights into state-level educational data trends and practices, ensuring the institution remains aligned with broader educational goals and standards.

The college is committed to, and invests in, professional development and specialized staff expertise. Regular professional development activities ensure staff are well-versed in the latest research techniques and data analysis tools, which maintains the integrity and accuracy of the institution's data collection. Having an IPEDS educator on staff adheres to the Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System's rigorous standards for data collection and reporting. This role is instrumental in meeting national reporting requirements and leveraging data to inform strategic decisions related to program development, student support services, and institutional planning. This fosters continuous improvement and accountability.

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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

4S

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) ensures the quality and relevance of its educational programs through comprehensive program reviews and rigorous assessment processes. Reviews are conducted regularly and involve thorough data analysis, faculty collaboration, and alignment with program goals. The college evaluates both Arts and Sciences and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs on a structured four-year cycle to maintain high standards. This systematic approach ensures that all academic offerings are consistently reviewed and improved. EICC employs robust assessment processes to measure student learning and program effectiveness. Within its participation in the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy, the college set ambitious goals for training faculty and staff in outcomes assessment, and developing course, program, and institutional learning outcomes. These efforts are overseen by committees that work collaboratively to assess policies and reflect on assessment goals and tools. Program-level accreditations help ensure EICC's offerings meet industry standards, contribute to continuous improvement, and maintain high educational quality.

Graduate success and effective educational programs are critical focuses for EICC. Through student and graduate surveys, program advisory councils, area employers, and educational partners, EICC collects detailed feedback on academic experience and career readiness. Benchmarking against external resources allows EICC to position its programs within the broader educational and economic context. The college systematically collects and analyzes data on student retention, equity, and completion, then uses the information to enhance student success. By maintaining a comprehensive and data-driven approach, EICC ensures that its programs effectively prepare students for further education and careers, supporting the institution's mission of fostering continuous growth and excellence.

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

5.A.1.

Effective shared governance at Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) integrates all internal stakeholders—Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in decision-making processes. This inclusive approach is built into the college's operational ethos and aligns with its mission and dedication to continuous improvement.

Governance:

Its governance framework is anchored by the Board of Trustees, which includes members from various districts to ensure community representation, as mandated by Iowa Code 260c and Board Policy 203. While the Trustees set and execute Board Policies, their actions and decisions are fully informed through input and analysis provided by the chancellor, Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Leadership Council, Academic Leadership Council (ALC), faculty groups, staff, students, and community stakeholders. Board Policies undergo a thorough review every three years in partnership with the administrative team, guaranteeing alignment with community interests and bolstering strategic planning.

College Leadership:

EICC's SLT is led by the chancellor, who meets weekly with the team to discuss and make decisions, drawing on input from various committees and councils.

Additionally, the Leadership Council, created in 2022, fosters engagement, provides a vital link in the decision-making chain, and ensures transparency and accountability. Comprised of faculty, staff, students, and administrators, it meets monthly to discuss significant institutional changes and national trends, and shares information with the broader college community.

In addition to Board Policy, EICC's governance model follows Administrative Procedures. The SLT, Leadership Council, ALC, and faculty groups, provide input into proposed Administrative Procedures. Then, they are vetted by staff and faculty before being presented to SLT. To ensure transparency, regular updates are provided during monthly public Board meetings and workshops. The chancellor is accountable to the Board and spearheads the college's daily operations, ensuring effective leadership and accountability.

Faculty and Staff:

EICC's committee structure includes the ALC, Student Development Council, Educational Programs Policies and Curriculum Council (EPC), and more. This structure encourages broad participation. Committee members play a significant role in shaping the college's strategic direction and strategic planning process, which charts the college's future course.

Strategic planning at EICC is rooted in stakeholder engagement, where gathering input, shaping visions, and establishing goals are central elements. The 2021 Strategic Planning initiative exemplifies this approach.

Conducted amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, a diverse group of leaders from various areas of the college convened virtually to draft key components of the plan. They sought input from a wider array of college faculty and staff through formal and informal channels, making the approach comprehensive and inclusive.

Additionally, the college used surveys to capture more insight, which was instrumental in forming a collective vision for the college's future. Voices from across the institution contributed to the strategic direction.

Reporting on the status of the strategic plan required collective input and gathering quantitative and qualitative data. The progress and evolution of the strategic plan was shaped by a wide range of insights and perspectives.

Faculty involvement was critical in the creation of three Career Advancement Centers and the Scott Community College (SCC) Health Sciences Center, completed as part of the 2021 Bond Levy projects. Faculty in key career and technical programs were involved in the planning, contributing significantly to the design of lab spaces and equipment selection, while also incorporating input from business and industry partners. It was a shared governance approach to facility development that guarantees students have optimal learning and training environments.

Shared governance has also been instrumental in developing EICC's Statement of Professional Standards and Core Values. Through meetings and discussions, cross-functional task forces created drafts that were shared college-wide for further input. This resulted in widespread support for these statements, which were ratified upon Board approval.

Students:

EICC's governance model includes students who participate in decision-making through student senates**,** clubs and organizations, and various committees, including the college leadership team. Student input was crucial in the development of SCC's enhanced Student Commons, ensuring the space met their needs. The college regularly seeks input from students as part of Career and Technical Education (CTE) program review, graduate surveys**,** Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE),and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).

The effectiveness of EICC's shared governance model is evident in the Career Advancement Centers and streamlined processes like the Guest Student Taskforce, Path Forward Debt Forgiveness program, and the college's successful response to challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic. These accomplishments underscore the efficacy of its shared governance model in fostering institutional success and student achievement.

5.A. 2.

Data is critical in EICC's planning processes and continuous quality enhancement. With rapid technological advancements, the college continually evolves and bases decisions on qualitative and quantitative data. It is challenging to describe all areas where data-informed decisions are occurring, as each college, division, department, and program uses a variety of reports, analytics, and key measures to frame critical discussions and final actions. Here are some notable examples:

At its highest level, the college employs key metrics to evaluate its progress in aligning with the Mission and achieving strategic goals. These measures are prominent in planning documents, such as the Strategic Plan, the annual Fact Book**,** and chancellor board evaluation, and undergo review at multiple levels, including the Board of Trustees and Senior Leadership Team.

At a more detailed level, EICC employs a comprehensive CTE Program Review and General Education Review process, further detailed in Criterion 3 and 4. The Program Review process includes all CTE programs and departments, each of which undergoes a thorough evaluation once every four years. The General Education Review has expanded to include Transfer Majors. Quantitative and qualitative data are the backbone of these academic reviews.

Various data sources are used as part of Strategic Planning, Program Review, and budgeting:

Enrollment Reports:

The college produces term, fiscal year, and program-level enrollment reports. Daily enrollment reports monitor new students and retention. Operational reports provide insight into services and enrollment patterns that help form critical course decisions. The official term and Fiscal Year enrollment reports are used in allocating resources and budget planning. Restructuring and enhancing the concurrent enrollment team was a decision informed by enrollment patterns.

Program Data Reports:

These provide data for quality improvement, including enrollment and student demographics, completion and retention rates, course success, employment data, and student, alumni, and stakeholder surveys.

Course Completion Reports:

These are generated each term and broadly distributed to administration and faculty for review. They provide aggregate data for each course, comparisons by mode of delivery along with a focus on high enrollment courses and development education. The PowerBi dashboards**,** new in Fall 2024, allow for drilling into the data and review of potential equity issues.

Retention Reports:

Fall to Fall and Fall to Spring retention reports provide term-to-term persistence data further analyzed by program/major. The reports segment data by delivery, student status, ethnicity/race, gender, and other demographics. EICC's focus on online student retention was informed by data in the retention analysis.

Transfer Reports:

Each academic year, the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) and state universities generate a Regent Transfer Report tracking educational outcomes. The data includes credit hour achievement, GPA, and graduation. This information aids EICC in reviewing transfer majors, advising practices, and transfer planning to enhance the success of students who transfer to other institutions for further education.

Student Surveys:

EICC uses various tools to gather input from its students. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the college participated in The Hope Survey by Temple University. It provided insight on resource needs of EICC students. The results led the college to add more mental health and food pantry resources. Annually, the college conducts student surveys as part of CTE program review. EICC participates in the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), which provide information on student engagement, a key factor in student learning. The survey assists in assessing institutional practices and student behaviors that impact learning, retention, and completion. As students prepare to graduate, they are asked to complete a Grad Card Survey and provide feedback on college services. Graduates are also surveyed regarding their successful transition to work or transfer. During COVID-19,

EICC conducted an internal student survey regarding needed services, class schedules, and delivery, which informed the college in adjusting services.

State Outcomes Dashboard:

IDOE provides student outcome data from its 15 community colleges. This includes wage, placement, continued enrollment**,** and other key elements, allowing EICC to evaluate the success of its student's post-enrollment while utilizing comparatives.

AdAstra Implementation:

EICC is implementing AdAstra to provide insights into space utilization and course section enrollment. This operational level data, provided to academic deans, will help them make decisions that support student success within budgetary constraints.

Website Improvement:

As part of the website redevelopment, EICC engaged a variety of stakeholders, utilized analytics, conducted focus groups, and tested draft concepts with primary users to ensure the new site would meet the needs of students and the college. The inputs were critically reviewed and utilized during the development stage. The marketing team continues to review with stakeholders and use Google Analytics to improve the website. In addition, the college uses Monsido to review the website for accessibility standards.

5.A.3.

EICC's organizational framework encourages and supports active participation from all stakeholders in shaping academic requirements, policies, and processes. Various councils, committees, task forces, and work groups have a defined purpose, charge, expected deliverables, administrative sponsor, and decision-making responsibility. Additionally, the list of members for each group is readily available, promoting transparency and accountability in the decision-making process.

A few key groups and faculty involvement:

Educational Programs, Policies and Curriculum Council (EPC):

This council shapes academic policy recommendations, curriculum, and program review processes. Of the 23 members on the EPC, 13 are faculty, ensuring that educators have a significant voice in academic matters.

Outcome Assessment Committee:

This committee of faculty and staff focus on assessment processes and practices. Faculty also participate in the HLC Assessment Academy and the HLC General Education Workshop.

Quality Faculty Plan Committee:

Per Iowa Code 281-IAC24.5(7), faculty and administrators provide perspectives related to faculty hiring and development.

Council for Teaching Excellence (EXCEL):

This faculty council is a valuable resource in developing and enhancing teaching and learning practices. It was instrumental in creating and coordinating the New Faculty Development course.

Diversity Council:

This council of faculty, staff, administrators, and individuals from various backgrounds address diversity-related matters. The members drove the creation of the Diversity Rich Course designation and reviews courses for designation.

EICC Student Development Council (SDC):

Student development staff, administrators, and three faculty actively plan and evaluate student development initiatives. Its goal is to promote student-centered decision-making with the Student Services functions of the College.

Regional Planning Partnerships: (RPPs):

EICC faculty and academic leaders actively participate in the Area 9 RPPs, focusing on CTE programs. These partnerships support K-12 school districts in developing and providing high-quality, cost-effective CTE programs. EICC faculty contribute to designing CTE curricula for K-12 schools, helping create smooth transitions and pathways for students.

State Transfer Major Committees: EICC faculty and academic leadership participated in the development of the Iowa Transfer Majors. As experts in their respective fields, they represented the college in creating the curriculum. EICC contributed to the statewide initiative while still retaining control and oversight at the local college level.

Recognizing Exemptional Service: The Emeritus Status Review Committee and the Distinguished Faculty Review Committee showcase EICC's faculty involvement in recognizing excellence.

Student Input:

EICC students engage through student senates, clubs, organizations, and have representation on the college's Leadership Council. Students have a platform for communication and opportunities to lead and learn. The college seeks input from students through CTE Program Review surveys and student interviews, graduate feedback, and co-curricular activities. The college participates in CCSSE and SENSE surveys which measure student engagement and success.

College Input:

The college seeks broad input into the Strategic Plan, Board Policies, and Administrative Procedures as described in Criterion 1. All the above create the framework and provide guidance that shape college decisions and resource allocation. Faculty and staff are highly involved in the development and reporting on the Strategic Plan.

EICC involves faculty, staff, and students in academic decision-making processes; evident through its well-structured and inclusive collaborative structures.

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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

5.B.1.

EICC demonstrates excellence in operational and programmatic support across various locations through fiscal management, resource allocation, advanced technology implementation, and facility development.

Financial Stability and Resource Allocation:

EICC's financial stability is evidenced by the 2016 upgrade to an Aa1 rating from Moody's Investors Service, which it has maintained through the most recent evaluation in 2023. The rating demonstrates its substantial tax base in the Quad Cities and Eastern Iowa region, operational flexibility, modest debt, and controlled pension liabilities.

EICC's diverse revenue streams are crucial for operational sustenance and program expansion. Revenue sources include tuition, fees, state and federal funding, local taxes, and other sources like grants. This diversified income portfolio allows the college to maintain financial stability in fluctuating economic and enrollment conditions.

EICC is methodical in budgeting and expenditure. The unrestricted fund balance, which stood at $6,181,375 or 12.81% of the Fiscal Year 2023 budget, surpasses the Board of Trustees' benchmark of six weeks of operational expenditures. This financial cushion ensures EICC can manage unforeseen expenses and provide program continuity.

Human Resource Management:

EICC is adaptable and committed to efficient resource allocation in human resources management. The college decreased full-time faculty and staff positions by 6.8% since FY14 while maintaining balanced resource allocation, aligning employee numbers with student headcount, which decreased by 7.8% in the same period.

In FY2023, the college allocated $500,000 to expand professional development. The Employee Professional Development Fund supports registration and travel expenses to attend conferences, workshops, and webinars. The Employee Educational Advancement Fund supports employees seeking a bachelor or graduate-level degree or non-degree certifications. Both programs support professional and educational advancement.

Facilities and Infrastructure:

EICC's operational strategy includes facility investment. In Spring 2021, the college asked voters to approve a $40 million bond levy. The request centered on several key projects to expand and enhance educational opportunities.

The bond levy widened the scope and reach of EICC's programs: it funded the construction of Career Advancement Centers in Clinton, DeWitt, and Muscatine and improved SCC's health science labs and facilities, strengthening and advancing a core area of study. EICC was able to expand CTE opportunities, which aligns with the growing demand for skilled professionals in technical fields.

EICC is also collaborating with the North Scott Community School District to establish a regional career training facility. This partnership will further connect educational resources and regional workforce needs. The college solidified its expansion strategy through Career Academy partnerships with area schools. The contracts guarantee enrollment for 10 years, providing long-term financial stability. This strategic approach to the sustainability and success of educational initiatives enhanced the college infrastructure and fortified its position as a leading provider of career-focused education.

The college successfully capitalized on historic tax credits to refurbish existing buildings in downtown Davenport in partnership with New College LLC, garnering widespread support from the community as part of a downtown revitalization initiative. The inauguration of the SCC Urban Campus in 2018 was a significant expansion of the college's presence and provided a contemporary educational setting equipped with advanced technology. Consolidating operations into a single location has resulted in improved maintenance and operational effectiveness.

The renovation projects at the CCC Library and MCC Loper Hall Library, supported by contributions from various foundations, leverage community resources. These projects contribute to the learning experience and improve the aesthetic and functional aspects of the campuses.

The Facilities Master Plan covers ongoing maintenance and renewal of facilities, allowing the college to provide high-quality education environments. The plan includes a comprehensive maintenance schedule, adherence to Board Policy 770, and strategic capital renewal projects funded by the Plant Fund Levy.

Technology Infrastructure and Advancements:

EICC's technology infrastructure provides a foundation to meet current and future needs. The college-wide wireless upgrade completed in 2021, and full data center refresh completed in

January 2024, increased the capacity and resilience of services. New software implementations, such as Ad Astra Room and Event Scheduling and PeopleAdmin for HR, increase staff efficiency. Upgrades to the EICConnect portal and self-service tools improve the user experience for students and employees. The EICC Technology Master Plan outlines projects and planning priorities in alignment with the Strategic Plan.

The college's response to COVID-19 challenges illustrates the adaptability of its technological infrastructure, staff, and management principles. During the crisis, it mobilized resources, providing **c**ontinuity in education and support services. It deployed laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots, leveraged communication tools like Zoom, expanded the use of CANVAS Learning Management System, and established public Wi-Fi access points in parking areas to facilitate remote learning. The Information Technology (IT) staff and Online Division were pivotal in training staff and students to adapt to the new tools and methodologies. This approach ensured the transition to remote learning and online operations was as smooth and efficient as possible, minimizing educational disruptions.

EICC embraces and effectively implements technological advancements which enhance the overall educational experience. Its technological readiness, combined with skilled and responsive IT and Online divisions, shows the college is resilient and adaptive, and maintains high operational standards even in challenging times.

Online Supports:

EICC participates in the Iowa Community College Online Consortium (ICCOC)**,** a collaborative network of Iowa community colleges that share online courses. A key advantage of ICCOC membership are the additional educational resources, including Brainfuse (an online tutoring platform), Dropout Detective (a tool for student retention), Harmonize (an online discussion platform)Student Resources. ICCOC Instructional Tools, InSpace (an online collaboration tool), Copyleaks, (plagiarism detection service), and shared library assets. These tools are integrated into Canvas, and the ICCOC has staff dedicated to overseeing course and tool management, bookstore integration, and instructional design. This provides EICC students with a comprehensive and supportive online learning environment.

Compliance and Regulatory Adherence:

EICC adheres to compliance and regulatory standards, as evident in annual independent audits and in alignment with Iowa statues and Board Policy 747. The auditor's reports for FY2023 and previous years affirm the college's compliance with accounting principles and federal program requirements, underscoring its commitment to transparency and accountability.

5.B.2.

EICC's goals, as reflected in its mission statement and strategic priorities, are ambitious and realistic. They are in harmony with its organizational structure, available resources, and opportunities it can leverage. This correlation demonstrates a dedication to excellence and capacity to fulfill its educational mission.

High-Quality Education and Training:

EICC delivers high-quality education and training through its investment in qualified faculty and modern facilities. Faculty requirements ensure that educators are knowledgeable and deliver an engaging learning experience. The upgraded health science facilities and new Career Advancement Centers, equipped with current industry-standard equipment, provide an educational experience that is relevant and rigorous. This ensures students are well-prepared for the demands of the workforce and links the college's resources and its educational goals.

Preparing a Skilled Workforce:

The college prepares a skilled workforce; a statement supported by strong graduation rates and placement statistics. Industry partners, who serve on CTE advisory boards, play a crucial role in keeping the curriculum aligned with workforce trends and standards. This partnership enhances the relevance of an EICC education.

Providing Equitable Access to Higher Education:

The college has multiple facilities across six counties, a wide availability of concurrent enrollment options for high school students, and array of scholarships to address access and financial barriers to education. Partnerships with area K-12 school districts have provided graduating high school seniors with over $7.3 million in tuition value. The HiSET tuition voucher and the Ascentra Credit Union Fund for Student Emergencies amplify EICC's efforts to make education accessible to all, including non-traditional and underserved populations. The college's Workforce Readiness Grant assisted 120 students in AY24 and closed financial gaps after the Iowa Legislature adjusted access to the Last-Dollar Scholarship program. EICC understands the diverse needs of its student body and is committed to inclusivity and equitable access.

Building and Strengthening Communities:

EICC's community engagement includes workforce development, career exploration, and industry training partnerships. These efforts benefit students, the local economy, and community development. The emphasis on creating and providing continuing education programs and classes is a recognition of the community's lifelong learning needs.

Strategic Priorities:

EICC's Strategic Plan priorities - student success, enrollment, equity, and innovation - are closely aligned with the mission and provide a clear roadmap for achieving the goals.

- **Student Success:** Free tutoring, resource-rich libraries, an emergency book fund, and more are ways EICC supports students throughout their education.

- **Enrollment:** Providing equitable access through scholarships and varied course delivery methods addresses needs of a diverse student population.

- **Equity:** EICC's inclusive culture means policy and decision-making are grounded in equity principles. The college creates a learning environment that is welcoming and supportive of all students.

- **Innovation:** Innovation and high performance in college operations and programs shows EICC is adapting and evolving to changing educational and industry landscapes.

EICC's goals are aspirational and backed by a strategic approach that considers the institution's strengths and capabilities. Its commitment to providing high-quality education, preparing a skilled workforce, providing equitable access, and contributing to community development are central to its mission and supported by well-planned strategies and resources. EICC achieves its ambitious goals effectively and responsibly.

5.B.3.

EICC's budget process aligns with Iowa Code 260C, as detailed on page 14, for the certified budget. Developing the budget includes public notice in a local newspaper and a public hearing to gather community feedback. The Board then approves the budget and establishes a tax levy, which is determined based on the taxable valuation of property. EICC submits its budget to the IDOE within a designated period, adhering to the Iowa Community College Accounting Manual and standards set by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.

EICC departmental budget requests are reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and department heads. Then, budget requests are submitted to the vice chancellor for administrative services for review. To ensure informed decisions, each submission must comprehensively justify each expense line item. Once approved, departmental budgets are amalgamated into a single working budget, which is presented to the Board for final approval in May.

Divisional deans compile academic equipment requests from program leaders and instructors. These are organized within a multi-year priority plan and must align with the facilities plan and strategic goals. The vice chancellor for academics and vice chancellor for administrative services evaluate the requests and decide which items will be proposed for approval.

Budget managers at EICC monitor their respective expenditures throughout the fiscal year. They access real-time financial data through Web Reporter budget reports and Ellucian Colleague reports. The Business Office provides training on these systems, purchasing processes, and an overview of the college's financial structure to ensure effective fiscal management.

Financial reports and college bills are a regular part of the Board's agenda, which includes a monthly financial report. Queries regarding bills are directed to the vice chancellor for administrative services before or during the Board meeting. Additionally, more comprehensive financial reports are presented during the August Fiscal Year report and Board workshops. Board members have extended opportunities for engagement, feedback, and dialogue.

EICC's finances undergo an annual independent audit by an external accounting firm, in compliance with Iowa Code Chapter 11. Following the audit, a representative from the firm

presents their findings at the next Board meeting. In the past 17 years, EICC has received unqualified or unmodified opinions in all audits.

5.B.4.

EICC has a multifaceted approach to revenue, leveraging grants, plant funds, state and federal opportunities, and voter-supported bonds to support its mission. This enables EICC to focus on initiatives that promote student success, enhance enrollment strategies, foster equity, and drive innovation through technology and partnerships. These are critical for preparing a skilled workforce and strengthening community ties, in line with EICC's charge within Iowa Code 260C.

Key aspects of this commitment are:

- Dedicating 68% of its general fund budget to instruction, academic support, student services, and scholarships.
- Completing the 2021 bond levy projects, which directed $40 million to expand CTE programs.
- Assisting 120 students in AY24 by covering financial gaps after the Iowa Legislature adjusted access to the Last-Dollar Scholarship program.
- Partnering with regional K-12 schools on 10-year 28E contracts to ensure enrollment and viability of the new Career Academies.
- Financially backing and expanding faculty and staff professional development opportunities through the Employee Educational Advancement Fund and Employee Professional Development Fund.
- Ongoing exploration of new programs that align with market trends and employment demands; integrating these costs into the institution's plant fund forecasts.
- Assessing program viability while balancing college financial models, occupational demand, and student enrollment trends.
- Supporting the Distinguished Faculty designation and awarding $227,000 for professional development from fiscal years 2018-2024.
- Utilizing Perkins funds to improve equipment and technology in CTE programs. In 2023, the college spent $270,000 in Perkins funding on program equipment.

Seeking state and federal grants to enhance and grow high-demand programs and support student success, including:

- $797K Iowa Workforce Grant to expand the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program.
- $1M Iowa Career Academy Grant to assist in the development of the DeWitt Career Advancement Center.
- $800K U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant used to purchase CNC and manufacturing instructional equipment.
- $175K General Assistance Program (GAP) state funding received annually to fund student scholarships.
- $400K Pathways to Academic & Career Excellence (PACE) state funding received annually to support positions that support students.
- $360K Iowa Department of Transportation grant to provide CDL training.
- $335K TRIO Federal Grant received annually to support first-generation, and/or low income, and/or students with disabilities.
- $600K Adult Basic Education, federal and state grants received annually to help students obtain high school equivalency and transition into college.
- $235K Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness (GEAR Up) state grant to support high school students through the post-secondary transition.
- $97K Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) Federal Grant to support high school graduates with disabilities transition to college.

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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

5.C.1.

EICC is committed to aligning resource allocation with its mission and strategic priorities. This is evident through the strategic planning process**,** which sets clear priorities for student success, enrollment, equity, and innovation. EICC's effective use of resources is highlighted by fiscal 2024 total general fund revenue of $48,508,021 and expenditures of $48,257,461, resulting in a balanced budget that supports its goals.

EICC's financial structure ensures accountability and transparency in resource allocation. The institution's annual budget is prepared and submitted to the state for approval, reflecting EICC's compliance with regulatory requirements. The budget process includes a thorough external audit that scrutinizes financial operations and ensures expenditure aligns with the college's strategic objectives. Furthermore, the annual fiscal year financial report and audit report are presented to the Board, providing an additional layer of transparency and oversight.

Board policies 704: Budget Publication and Public Review, 705: Budget Adoption by the Board, 706: Budget as a Spending Plan, 702: Planning the Budget, 703: Requirements of the Budget, 745: Secretary's Monthly Report, 747: Audits provide general oversight of financial and operational practices. These policies and review of the annual financial report and audit ensure EICC's resource allocation aligns with its mission, strategic priorities, and adheres to the highest standards of accountability and efficiency. Through this structured governance framework, the college's resource management practices are transparent, effective, and conducive to achieving its educational and community-focused goals.

In line with its strategic focus and stakeholder engagement practices, EICC sought feedback in 2020 to identify opportunities for enhancing and expanding CTE programs through a bond levy initiative. This ensured that projects funded by the bond levy were directly aligned with regional economic needs. In March 2021, voters overwhelmingly supported the bond levy, demonstrating their trust in EICC's vision and its ability to address regional training needs. The establishment of the Clinton, DeWitt, and Muscatine Career Advancement Centers, and expansion of the SCC Health Sciences Center, shows EICC prioritizes initiatives that bolster regional workforce development and educational access. This reflects EICC's broader commitment to resource allocation that supports its mission, responds to community needs, and enhances student success and regional vitality.

The bond levy projects allowed the college to expand career academies and partnerships with schools through 28E agreements. These agreements provide students with no-cost options for higher education while in high school. EICC took a proactive approach to meeting regional demands for trained workers by ensuring financial viability of the programs and services.

The creation of Career and College Transition Counselors leveraged partnerships to elevate services that align with EICC's mission and strategic objectives. These positions provide crucial advising and college readiness services to students and are funded through a shared cost model with K-12 schools, IDOE, and the college.

EICC's four foundations support students and college-specific projects, exemplifying the college's strategic allocation of resources in alignment with its mission and priorities. Foundation resources and supporter connections are often leveraged to enhance academic programs, target scholarships to assist with the enrollment of underserved populations and increase student retention. These resources frequently serve as the initial funding source for innovative projects, which are then further supported by district and state resources, maximizing the impact on educational and community development. This approach ensures that the institution's mission-driven initiatives receive the necessary support to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the community.

EICC's allocation of resources, as outlined in its strategic plan and operational practices, exemplifies a comprehensive and effective approach to supporting its educational mission and strategic priorities. By focusing on student success, enrollment, equity, and innovation, and by engaging in partnerships and leveraging various funding sources, EICC is well-positioned to deliver high-quality education and training, which fulfills its mission and contributes to community strength and vitality.

5.C.2.

EICC integrates the assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with institutional goals. This approach is embedded in EICC's culture and strategic planning processes, ensuring decisions are informed by data and enhance student success and operational efficiency.

Assessment of Student Learning:

Student learning outcomes (SLOs) are assessed through diverse evaluation methods, including direct assessment, surveys, and rigorous program reviews. This approach is applied across CTE programs and General Education, ensuring that academic offerings are aligned with industry standards and responsive to the evolving educational needs of students. The CTE program review process guides the allocation of equipment and Perkins funds**,** allowing for strategic investment in enhancing program resources and student learning experiences.

Evaluation of Operations:

Operational efficiency is continuously assessed through enrollment reports, program data reports, course completion reports, and retention reports. EICC monitors and adapts to changing enrollment patterns, course delivery effectiveness, and student retention challenges. The adoption of tools like AdAstra for space utilization and course enrollment planning further demonstrates EICC's dedication to optimizing resources for student success.

Planning:

Data informed strategic planning incorporates key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate progress toward achieving the college's mission and goals. This is supported by regular program reviews, which include a thorough evaluation of CTE and General Education programs**.** The use of enrollment, program, and student survey data informs decision-making at all levels, ensuring that planning is aligned with student needs and institutional priorities.

Budgeting:

EICC's budgeting process is linked to assessment and planning, ensuring **r**esources support strategic priorities. The annual budget process integrates program review outcomes and strategic planning priorities to ensure budget allocations support academic excellence and operational needs. Allocating resources for professional development, technology updates, and facilities improvements reflects EICC's commitment to enhancing the educational environment and student learning experiences.

EICC's integrated approach ensures that assessment, evaluation, planning, and budgeting processes are interconnected, promoting a cycle of continuous improvement. By aligning these processes, EICC effectively supports its strategic goals, enhances student learning and success, and ensures operational efficiency and effectiveness.

5.C.3.

EICC's strategic planning process encompasses the college, incorporating perspectives from internal and external constituent groups. Over the years, the college has invited students, faculty, staff, residents, community leaders, and business and industry representatives to participate in forums and provide feedback.

In 2021, the planning process adapted to the challenges posed by COVID-19, shifting to an online model to maintain engagement. EICC utilized Zoom to facilitate comprehensive

discussions with a large cross-functional leadership group from various sectors of the college and the broader community. This virtual approach enabled stakeholders to participate in interactive online meetings where documents were collaboratively reviewed and edited in real-time.

The 2021 Strategic Plan and Mission Statement process engaged a diverse array of stakeholders, including the Cabinet, Student Development Council, Educational Planning Committee, Academic Leadership Council, and the Board of Trustees. It also incorporated perspectives from K-12 Career Academy partners, Sector Boards, and representatives from business and industry.

The Strategic Plan is updated each fall with fiscal year data and narratives and was recently extended. In Fall 2023, the chancellor recommended a one-year extension to 2025, which the Board formally approved in December 2023. In January 2024, the director of strategic initiatives and assessment and the vice chancellor of strategy, support, and planning presented a midterm report outlining progress on the strategic plan. This report incorporated qualitative data from committees, minutes, feedback from campus meetings, professional development activities, surveys, and campus events, alongside quantitative data from annual reports and Institutional Research. Each strategic initiative was assessed and categorized as emerging, developed, or sustained based on evaluation, adaptation, and goal attainment.

Throughout the year, committees and departments provide and review data on strategic initiatives. Many EICC faculty and staff committees and task forces post meeting minutes on the SharePoint intranet site, an open communication tool that offers all employees 24/7 access to reports, minutes, and data. The Board also monitors performance in all areas through monthly financial, personnel, and staff reports.

5.C.4.

EICC is strategic in planning and adapting to revenue and enrollment changes, as well as external factors such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy, and state support. Here are some examples:

Strategic planning alignment:

EICC integrates its mission and priorities into strategic planning and resource allocation. It sets measurable goals aligned with key metrics, ensuring its direction and resource distribution are in harmony with core objectives.

Maximizing resources through partnerships:

Strategic partnerships allow EICC to optimize resources for students. It collaborates with external organizations and businesses and utilizes grant funding that aligns with strategic goals.

Budgeting with a mission-focus:

EICC's budgeting process is tied to its mission and priorities, and it utilizes an array of funding sources to achieve its objectives.

Foundation support and role:

The four EICC foundations support the college's mission and are dedicated to enhancing the college's capacity and strategic aims.

Integrated assessment and planning:

Student learning assessment is linked to operational evaluation, planning, and budgeting. It is an integrated approach that utilizes data from multiple sources to continually assess and improve operations.

Program review and resource allocation:

Thorough program reviews lead to informed budget requests that orient with strategic priorities.

Engaging stakeholders in strategic planning:

By seeking and receiving significant involvement from internal and external stakeholders, EICC's plans reflect diverse perspectives and needs of the community and region.

Adaptability to demographic and economic trends:

By integrating factors into institutional planning, such as demographic changes**,** globalization, and economic shifts, EICC remains responsive and adaptive to evolving external environments.

Commitment to diversity and inclusion:

Initiatives aimed at increasing diversity and inclusion show EICC is responding to demographic trends and preparing students for a global society.

Focus on workforce development:

EICC supports its local economy through CTE programs that develop new workforce and address regional labor shortages and training needs.

Advocacy for state funding and financial planning:

EICC collaborates with community colleges across Iowa to advocate for state funding and takes a proactive approach in adjusting financial plans based on state allocations and external factors.

Financial Resilience:

Through strong financial reserves, EICC can adapt financial plans to external changes.

The college has a comprehensive and strategic approach to planning, based on a sound understanding of its current capacity, revenue, enrollment fluctuations, and evolving external factors.

5.C.5.

The chancellor and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) monitor local, state and national information through affinity groups**,** governmental organizations, local and regional economic development corporations, the Association of American Community Colleges (AACC)**,** a variety of local and national committees**,** and educational organizations. This positions the college well in anticipating, and considering, emerging trends and educational needs against state support.

The Iowa Community College Online Consortium (ICCOC) network, EICC CTE program advisory committees, and Sector Boards are important sources for forecasting regional program and technology needs. An annual ICCOC best practice conference shares distance learning innovations.

Technology Advancements:

Technology Master Planning is an ongoing process overseen by EICC's chief information officer (CIO) and IT leadership. The Technology Master Plan aligns with EICC's Strategic Plan priorities, ensuring that technological initiatives support broader institutional goals. It is a dynamic, flexible, and rolling document, with review and revision occurring in early fall each year to stay current with rapid technological changes and emerging needs.

The input of stakeholders, including program faculty, is vital in determining program-level technology needs. Faculty provide insight into the technological requirements of their specific programs, ensuring that advancements match the instructional and programmatic requirements and workforce needs. The Technology Master Plan is informed by those who are directly involved in delivering educational content.

The Technology Master Plan, along with a detailed list of major projects, is presented to the chancellor and the SLT for final recommendations. Following this, the plan is submitted to the Board of Trustees for final approval, ensuring that all technological initiatives are scrutinized and endorsed at the highest levels of governance within the institution. This rigorous process guarantees EICC's technological infrastructure and capabilities are robust, forward-looking, and aligned with the institution's mission and strategic vision.

Demographic and Enrollment Shifts:

To understand and plan for demographic changes in Eastern Iowa, the college leverages a variety of data sources. The college's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) analyzes regional demographic data, including information from the U.S. Census Bureau**,** IDOE enrollment projections for school districts, high school graduation reports, and outcomes data. EICC's IR department further breaks down data by demographics across delivery methods, programs, and college locations to aid in planning. Through rigorous analysis, EICC anticipates population shifts that

could significantly affect enrollment and program demand. Additionally, the college uses labor market information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and local economic development agencies to align programs with the evolving workforce needs of the region.

To address achievement gaps and foster equity, EICC is guided by national best practice research and equity assessments. The college is developing an updated Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan with stakeholders across the institution, focusing on strategies to enhance attraction and retention of a diverse student body. The plan emphasizes inclusive practices and aims to foster diversity within the college, ensuring programs and services are accessible and equitable to all students. Through the integration of specific data sources and focused approach to equity and inclusion, EICC is focused on understanding and serving the dynamic needs of its diverse student population and the broader community.

Globalization:

EICC is intensifying its efforts to cultivate global competencies. The college created a system for designating courses rich in diversity, which can help students expand their global perspectives and inclusive mindset. The college is refining its Credit for Prior Learning process to be more inclusive and appealing to a broader array of learners, including veterans and individuals from varied cultural backgrounds. This initiative underscores the college's commitment to preparing graduates proficient in languages and global competencies.

EICC's Criminal Justice program encompasses this approach by encouraging students to complement their studies in defensive tactics, evidence handling, and physical preparedness with language courses such as Spanish or American Sign Language. It is a holistic educational model that broadens students' cultural understanding and global engagement.

The college offers a suite of programs designed to integrate recent immigrants more seamlessly into the community and the educational system. These programs include English Language Learning courses and college planning sessions conducted in Spanish.

EICC actively participates in international programs like Sister Cities, remaining engaged with global economic development and cultural exchange trends. This reflects the college's commitment to providing an education focused on global citizenship and economic collaboration.

In Summer 2022, a faculty member attended the World Congress of Soil Science in Glasgow, Scotland, using distinguished faculty funds. This international conference, held every four years, gathers over 3,000 soil scientists from around the world. Afterward, she integrated what she learned into courses such as Soil Science, Fertilizers, Integrated Crop Management, and Renewable Natural Resources. Specific examples include virtual soil tours, teaching about the environmental impact of livestock production, and exploring soils' role in carbon sequestration. She also shared her experiences at the 2022 EICC Fall Development Day, enhancing faculty and staff knowledge, too.

The college has also provided study abroad and international trips for students. Although these opportunities were halted during the COVID-19 pandemic, EICC is now working to reintegrate these experiences into academic programs and co-curricular activities to further enrich global competencies.

The Economy:

EICC forges robust partnerships with business and industry, recognizing the pivotal role these collaborations play in tailoring programs to meet the evolving demands of the labor market. By actively monitoring local and regional economic trends, EICC ensures its curriculum and training programs are directly aligned with the needs of employers, thereby addressing current and anticipated labor shortages. The college's CTE program advisory committees and Sector Boards are instrumental in shaping work-based learning opportunities, fostering a pipeline of skilled workers ready to contribute to economic growth and innovation.

EICC's dedication to workforce development extends to its strategic collaborations within Regional Planning Partnerships, which bring together K-12 schools, full-time faculty, and high school instructors to create seamless educational pathways that support economic development and secure state support for comprehensive training initiatives.

Developing and delivering curriculum and training programs that fill regional employment needs is central to EICC's mission. Strong ties with local and regional employers play a critical role in ensuring students acquire the necessary skills to thrive in the workforce. This symbiotic relationship contributes to the success of each student and has a tangible impact on the economic vitality of Iowa. By maintaining a pulse on institutional, regional, and national trends in admissions and concurrent enrollment, EICC is adept at forecasting state-level student demographics and identifying emerging needs for support services and financial assistance. This approach ensures EICC remains a key contributor to the region's economic resilience and growth.

State Support:

EICC places a significant emphasis on legislative advocacy to secure state support critical for its operations and expansion of programs. Through proactive engagement with state legislators, EICC leverages its relationships and networks to advocate for policies and funding that support community colleges and their mission. Through collaborations with statewide associations and direct engagement in legislative sessions, the college aims to influence educational policy and community college funding. This approach seeks to secure financial support and to highlight the vital role EICC plays in workforce development, economic growth, and social mobility. By positioning itself as a key stakeholder in the legislative process, the college ensures its needs and contributions are recognized and supported at the state level, which enhances its ability to serve students and the community.

5.C.6.

Through strategic initiatives and feedback mechanisms, EICC takes a proactive and comprehensive approach to enhancing student success and operational efficiency. College efforts center on addressing barriers to student success, enhancing community engagement, and leveraging technology to improve educational outcomes.

Key initiatives at EICC include:

Comprehensive Wraparound Services:

EICC provides a range of student services aimed at reducing barriers. These include TRIO**,** RISE**,** food pantries, scholarships**,** and technology assistance through libraries and tutoring centers**.** Notably, EICC added a full-time mental health counselor and expanded services to further address students' mental health needs, a critical aspect of support in the post-COVID era.

Community Engagement and Partnerships:

Collaboration with community organizations, such as partnerships with Riverbend Foodbank and NAMI mental health trainings, reflect EICC's commitment to enhance student success, and to engage with and contribute to the broader community.

Technology and Online Support:

EICC's strategic use of technology to enhance student support is evident in its full employment of Dropout Detective**,** and the transition of key processes like financial aid appeals and guest student registration to streamlined online platforms through Docuware**.** These efforts are complemented by academic and virtual mental health support for online students, ensuring they also receive comprehensive support.

Feedback-Informed Initiatives:

EICC's engagement in surveys such as Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Survey of Entering Student Engagement SENSE, and the Hope Center for Basic Needs (HOPE) Survey, and the resulting reflection on student barriers, shows how the college uses student feedback to inform and refine its strategies. This feedback allows EICC to respond to the evolving needs and challenges of the student body.

Guided Pathways and Academic Support:

EICC's guided pathways structure and enhanced academic support, including the newly aligned academic dean structure, is wholly focused on student success. These initiatives provide clear, structured pathways for students, alongside robust support mechanisms throughout their academic journey.

EICC's strategic initiatives take a holistic approach to education. Student success is fostered through targeted support services, community engagement, and the strategic use of technology.

This approach addresses barriers to success and builds a foundation for long-term improvement and innovation.

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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

5 Summary

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) embodies the principles of shared governance, ensuring that all internal stakeholders—including the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students—are actively involved in decision-making processes. This collaborative approach is embedded in the institution’s ethos, aligning with its mission and dedication to continuous improvement. The governance framework is anchored by the Board of Trustees, whose decisions are informed by comprehensive input from the chancellor, Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Leadership Council, Academic Leadership Council (ALC), and various community stakeholders. Regular reviews of Board Policies guarantee that the institution's actions remain aligned with community interests and strategic objectives.

Strategic planning at EICC is a data-informed and stakeholder-inclusive process. Utilizing a variety of data sources, EICC ensures decision-making aligns with its strategic goals. Comprehensive reviews of CTE and General Education programs underscore the college’s commitment to evidence-based planning and budgeting. EICC remains adaptable and resilient, as demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, maintaining high operational standards even in challenging times.

EICC employs qualified and dedicated staff and faculty who play a crucial role in achieving the college’s mission. Various councils and committees, including the Educational Programs, Policies, and Curriculum Council (EPC), the Outcome Assessment Committee, and the Diversity Council, ensure academic policies and processes are collaboratively developed and thoroughly reviewed. The college’s budgeting process involves meticulous monitoring of expenses to ensure financial stability and appropriate resource allocation. Continuous improvement is driven by integrating assessment, planning, and budgeting, ensuring EICC’s operations and student outcomes are consistently enhanced. EICC successfully fulfills its mission as "The Community’s College," as it is dedicated to serving and advancing the educational and economic needs of the region.

Sources

There are no sources.