Assurance Argument

Illinois College - IL

3/30/2015
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 broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution’s academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution’s planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument

Illinois College's mission is broadly understood within the College and guides the College's operations. It is clearly articulated for our students, staff, faculty, and administration (see 1.B), developed through a process suited to the College, and adopted by our Board of Trustees. Our academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with our mission, and the College's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support our mission.

Section 2 of the College's Charter indicates the College is governed by "The Trustees of Illinois College," and Article I, Section 2 of the College's By-Laws indicates the Board of Trustees has the authority to determine and periodically review the College's mission. The mission was reviewed under Dr. Axel D. Steuer, President of the College from 2003 to 2013, and it was adopted by the Board of Trustees in February 2004.

The College's mission commits us to a liberal arts education that develops in students the qualities of mind and character needed for fulfilling lives of leadership and service. An Illinois College education is an education for life -- an education for life-long learning that encourages students to be open-minded and respect people who hold different values, helps students think critically and communicate effectively both in writing and in speaking, and prepares students for a life of responsible civic engagement.

The general education program, the BLUEprint, is the primary way these qualities of mind and character are developed in students by the College's academic programs. The BLUEprint was developed by the faculty from April 2008 to April 2010 and became effective in Fall 2012. Focusing on learning communities, explorations, interdisciplinary connections, and skills, the BLUEprint extends from our students' first year at the College to their last year. Each First-Year Seminar is connected to either a writing course or a speaking course. The same group of students takes both courses, forming a learning community. As they progress through the curriculum, students explore courses in (1) creative expressions, (2) cultures and worldview, (3) science in society, and (4) social, spiritual, and philosophical issues. They make interdisciplinary connections in at least two pairs of connected courses, one pair of which links a modern language course with another course at the
College. Students develop their skills by participating in multiple writing-extensive, speaking-extensive, and community/civic engagement experiences. In multiple courses, they examine US diversity and global awareness, ethical and responsible action, information literacy, and statistical literacy. Each of the College's 35 major programs requires courses that furnish their own majors with writing-extensive and speaking-extensive experiences and that enable them to examine ethical and responsible action and information literacy. The culminating experience in the BLUEprint is a Senior Capstone course in students' major programs. This course requires students to use the skills and knowledge they have acquired and developed throughout the BLUEprint and in their majors. In these ways, the BLUEprint fosters in students the qualities of mind and character essential to an Illinois College education.

Given its commitment to leadership and service, the College prepares students academically for a life of responsible civic engagement by providing multiple community/civic engagement experiences in the BLUEprint. In a special way, however, the College also prepares students for this kind of life by offering them the opportunity to participate in the Al Habtoor Leadership Program. Co-curricular service activities are coordinated by the Office of Community Engagement and Service.

The College uses multiple student support services to assist students in developing the qualities of mind and character essential to an Illinois College education. The Chesley Health and Wellness Center provides health care, while the Templeton Counseling Center offers psychological support. The College also offers its students disability services. Students needing academic assistance may use the Campus Writing Center, the Speech Communication Center, or the Center for Academic Excellence, where students receive tutoring or discuss specific study strategies, such as note-taking or time management. The Center for Academic Excellence also houses the College's federally-funded TRiO Student Support Services Program. Finally, the College's Early Intervention Group assists struggling students in various ways (see 4.C.3).

Given its commitment to the liberal arts, the College focuses primarily on undergraduate education. Simultaneously, the College is committed to the public good, as is clear from the Mission Statement's emphasis on leadership and service. Hence, in addition to the undergraduate education program, the College offers a Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) Program, which, initiated in 2011, is designed to foster the professional development of in-service teachers. Though, for instance, in Fall 2012 there were 17 students enrolled in the College's masters program, overwhelmingly the College's enrollment profile has remained consistent with its goal to serve undergraduate students, whose enrollment in Fall 2012 was 970 and whose enrollment in Fall 2014 was 957.

The 2004 Strategic Plan, adopted by the Faculty and the Board of Trustees under President Steuer, which is known as "Leading the Way," contains a Vision Statement that aligns with and supports the College's mission by specifying a list of goals and objectives that are grouped into six strategic areas, including (1) academic programs, (2) faculty and staff, (3) students, (4) facilities, (5) finances, and (6) recruitment and retention. Beginning in 2004, the goals and objectives of "Leading the Way" were regularly reviewed by the Board's Advancement and Long Range Planning Committee. In February 2010, the first sentence of the Vision Statement in "Leading the Way" was revised to read: "By 2015, Illinois College will be widely recognized as one of the top twenty-five residential liberal arts colleges in the Midwest and as being among the top one hundred residential liberal arts colleges nationally in terms of the quality of its educational programs." This change to the Vision Statement required clear planning and budgeting priorities, and those priorities were delineated in "Realizing the Illinois College Vision," which was embraced by a resolution of the Board's Advancement and Long Range Planning Committee in February 2011. Hence, "Realizing the Illinois College Vision" contains the planning and budgeting priorities intended to bring to fruition by 2015 the goals and objectives originally stated in the College's 2004 Strategic Plan. In 5.C, it will be shown that the College has, in
fact, allocated its resources in alignment with "Realizing the Illinois College Vision" and our mission.

Dr. Barbara A. Farley, the current President of the College, arrived in June 2013. President Farley has focused intensively on the College's strategy. She has examined "Realizing the Illinois College Vision" to determine how the College might best pivot as it moves into the future. To assist her in constructing a new Strategy Map that incorporates her vision of inspiring achievement, President Farley undertook from October 2013 to May 2014 a nationwide Presidential Tour. She met with Illinois College alumni, parents, and friends. In addition to meeting with members of the Board of Trustees, President Farley held Town Hall Meetings open to the entire campus community, the first of which occurred in November 2013, and she hosted separate Strategy Map Brainstorming Sessions for students, faculty, and staff to understand better where the College is and where it should go in the future. In the spring of 2014, President Farley invited to campus representatives of Credo, the higher education consulting firm with which she and the College's vice-presidents had been working since the summer of 2013. Credo helped the College's Cabinet and the Strategic Steering Committee guide the campus through the development and elaboration of the College's Strategy Map, which was drafted by May 2014, revised during the summer and the fall of 2014, and brought before the Board of Trustees at its February meeting in 2015. As the Strategy Map makes clear, Illinois College's mission will remain the basis for all the College does (see 5.C.3).

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of 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 document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

The College's Mission Statement is found on the College's website and also appears near the beginning of the College Catalog, the Student Handbook, the Staff Handbook, and the Faculty Handbook. These documents are available in annually updated versions on the College's website.

The College's Vision Statement, rooted in its 2004 Strategic Plan, is also on the College's website, and the College's values are mentioned in its Vision Statement. The penultimate paragraph of the College's Vision Statement reads: "The College will affirm and model the moral purpose it serves in society and will place a special emphasis on education of character. It will make evident, both in its corporate and its individual expressions, a commitment to diversity, to good stewardship of our natural environment, and to the shared institutional values of excellence, integrity, community, justice, service, respect and openness." These values serve as the basis for the College's Affirmation of Community Responsibility. This Affirmation, which is read aloud by all administrators, faculty, staff, returning students, and incoming students present at the Opening Celebration at the beginning of each academic year, appears on the College's website and is printed in the College Catalog, the Student Handbook, the Staff Handbook, and the Faculty Handbook.

The College's mission, vision, and values indicate the extent of the College's current emphasis on teaching, scholarship, service for the public good, and moral education (see 2.E for the College's Code of Integrity).

The College's mission commits us to the highest standards of scholarship and integrity in the liberal arts. Teaching is the most important activity at the College. The Faculty Handbook specifies this in multiple places (1, 2). Therefore, while it is important for the highest standards of scholarship to be exhibited, the College emphasizes excellent teaching that is informed by such scholarship.

The College's mission and vision emphasize leadership and service, both of which aim at the public good, and the moral dimension of an Illinois College education has never been in doubt. In Section 11 of the College's Charter, it is stated that students may be suspended or expelled "whose habits are idle or vicious, or whose moral character is bad." Though the College does not enforce this power today, our Affirmation of Community Responsibility delineates the values we all -- administrators, staff, faculty, and students -- must exhibit in our daily interactions with each other, thereby providing the moral framework within which the work of the College and the education of our students occurs.
The documents articulating the College's mission, vision, and values identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the College's educational programs and services. Together, these documents indicate that the College offers a liberal arts education that extends in scope to the minds and characters of its students who are the directly intended constituents of the College's programs and services but who, because of a commitment to leadership and service fostered by the College as well as a commitment to fundamental moral values such as respect and justice, in turn may benefit the local, regional, national, and global community.

Sources

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution’s processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

Illinois College addresses its role in a multicultural society, and its activities have reflected attention to human diversity.

The College's mission focuses on leadership and service, which occur in relation to others in society. Hence, as human societies are diverse, the College's mission entails a focus on diversity, and the penultimate paragraph of the College's Vision Statement declares the College's commitment to diversity. The College acts on this commitment by addressing its role in a multicultural society through its curricular and co-curricular programs.

The BLUEprint focuses on diversity in three ways. First, in the foundations portion of the BLUEprint, every First-Year Seminar includes two class meetings on diversity, and one of the four convocations annually linked to the First-Year Seminar Program focuses on diversity. Second, in the explorations portion of the BLUEprint, students take at least one course in Cultures and Worldviews and at least one course in another language. Finally, US Diversity/Global Awareness is one of the seven embedded experiences in the BLUEprint. Hence, the study of diversity is infused into the curriculum at Illinois College.

The College also offers co-curricular programs that focus on diversity. Both the Study Abroad Program and the BreakAway Program enable students to gain educational experiences related to diversity by traveling away from campus. In the Intercultural Exchange Program, not only do approximately 10 Illinois College students travel biennially to Ritsumeikan University of Kyoto, Japan for three weeks during the summer, but also typically 27 Japanese students from Ritsumeikan University visit Illinois College for four weeks each spring semester. Illinois College students may also select from professional experience programs that are concerned with diversity. For instance, in recent years, 15 students have participated in Model United Nations. Or students may complete internships or courses in The Chicago Center for Urban Life and Culture Program, which helps them "connect with the practical work world outside the college campus and deepen their understanding of America's economic and political structures, race and gender relations, and the role of the arts in community and social discourse." The College's faculty has also collaborated with The Chicago Center, for example, as part of a workshop on community engagement in the summer of 2014.

The College's Office of Diversity and Inclusion, directed by Tonya R. Daniel, works to "conduct activities and provide services to create an inclusive environment at Illinois College." It coordinates cultural awareness activities with student organizations, such as Diversity Week, which is sponsored in the Fall semester by the student organization Coalition for Ethnic Awareness, and it has coordinated cultural activities for faculty, staff, and students, such as the Soul Food Dinner, Gospel Festival, and Multicultural Festival held in Spring 2014. In 2013-2014, Dr. Justin Mallet, former Director, led a Diversity Seminar Series for faculty and staff.
Finally, as part of the College's student-life activities, students can join a number of student organizations concerned with diversity -- whether that diversity relates to ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs. These organizations, which have had varying rates of student participation during the past few years, have included, for example, the Black Student Union, Coalition for Ethnic Awareness, IC Feminists, and Straights and Gays for Equality as well as not only several religious organizations, such as Brothers and Sisters in Christ and Newman Catholic Community, but also the Secular Student Alliance, which emphasizes humanism and non-religious thought (see 4.A.1).

In addition to addressing its role in a multicultural society, the College has acted on its commitment to diversity by behaving in concrete ways that reflect attention to human diversity. This is clear, for instance, from an analysis of trends from the past few years concerning the composition of the undergraduate student body, full-time faculty, and the College's administration.

Information concerning the gender and ethnic composition of the undergraduate student body and full-time faculty is presented in the College's 2012-2013 Fact Book. Each year from 2004 to 2012, the gender of the student body consistently fell within a few percentage points of 50% female and 50% male. During the same period, however, the ethnic composition of the student body changed with a generally upward trend in the percentage of non-Caucasian U.S. students from 6.4% in 2004 to 20.5% in 2012. The largest increase occurred with domestic minority students. In particular, the number of African American students and domestic Hispanic students increased from 27 African American students in 2004 to 80 in 2012 and from 17 domestic Hispanic students in 2004 to 49 in 2012. Hence, the ethnic diversity of the undergraduate student body has increased, greatly increasing the informal opportunities for students to engage with students from backgrounds different from their own.

From 2004 to 2012, the gender composition of the full-time faculty changed with a generally downward trend in the number of men from 48 in 2004 to 42 in 2012 and a generally upward trend in the number of women from 26 in 2004 to 38 in 2012. So, while gender representation was far from equal in 2004, by 2012 it was roughly equal. During the same period, however, there was little change in the ethnic composition of the full-time faculty, which remained overwhelmingly White/Non-Hispanic. The College's staff has also been overwhelmingly White/Non-Hispanic; this is consistent with the ethnic composition of the population of Jacksonville, Illinois and the surrounding area.

Finally, the gender diversity of the College's administration increased from 2004 to 2014. As indicated in Article III of the College's By-Laws, the College's officers include the President of the College, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Business Affairs, Vice President for Student Affairs, Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations, and Vice President for Enrollment Management and College Marketing. A review of the College Catalog indicates that, in 2004, only one of these six positions was held by a woman, the VP for Student Affairs. Yet, in 2014, four of these six positions were held by women.

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1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
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 identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

Illinois College's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

The College's commitment to the public good through leadership and service is declared in its Mission Statement and has been consistently exhibited in its actions. The College has emphasized service in its curricular program and co-curricular activities, and the behavior of the members of the Illinois College community, especially Illinois College students, reveals that they have for a long time engaged with, and responded to the needs of, external constituencies and communities of interest.

Service is embedded in two ways in the BLUEprint. First, the Service Blitz and one common reading about service are part of each First-Year Seminar. Second, as part of the community/civic engagement experience, students take either one course, an independent study project including a reflective essay, or a faculty-approved co-curricular activity focusing on service. There are numerous service-learning courses that offer this experience for students.

Illinois College is a member of the Illinois Campus Compact, a coalition of colleges and universities in Illinois committed to increasing campus-wide participation in community and public service. The Office of Community Engagement and Service maintains a service directory listing Jacksonville area organizations with which the College collaborates on service opportunities. These external constituencies and communities of interest may be served by Illinois College students working either individually or as part of a group -- as part of a class or as part of one of the many student organizations that focus on community service. "Chuck It for Charity" is one service event in which many individual students and offices across the College participate, helping several local organizations. Students may participate in the Alternative Break Service Trip when classes are not in session during winter break. Anyone can access information concerning all of the service activities available through the College by consulting the Illinois College Leadership and Service Calendar.

The College's commitment to service for the public good has been acknowledged. For instance, in 2014 -- for the eighth straight year -- the College was selected for the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, which is determined by the Corporation for National and Community Service. In its 2010 article "The 25 Best Schools for Do-Gooders," Newsweek ranked Illinois College 12th on its list of the 25 most service-minded schools in the nation. In 2013, Illinois College was ranked 25th in the nation among liberal arts colleges by The Washington Monthly, which ranks schools "based on their contribution to the public good in three broad categories: Social Mobility (recruiting and graduating low-income students), Research (producing cutting-edge..."
scholarship and PhDs), and Service (encouraging students to give something back to their country)."

Finally, in 2014, the same publication ranked Illinois College 67th in the nation among liberal arts
colleges but 3rd in service.

Although the College is committed to the public good through leadership and service, the College's
mission requires that the institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over all other purposes.
First and foremost, then, the College is an educational community, one committed to the liberal arts
but one which, along with and as a result of that primary commitment, develops in its students the
qualities of mind and character needed for fulfilling lives of leadership and service. The College's
budget reflects that primary commitment, with all of the revenue from students used for the education
of students and with substantial use of endowment funds also focused on students' education (see
5.A).

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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

Illinois College fulfills Criterion 1, because the College's mission is clear, articulated publicly, and guides the College's operations.

Strength

- As noted in 1.A, the College's current President, Dr. Barbara A. Farley, arrived in June 2013. As President Farley has worked with the members of the Illinois College community to determine the College's strategy for the future, it has been clear that the College's mission will remain foundational for all the College does.

Challenge

- Reflection on our mission and the College as a whole has indicated a challenge, namely, the ethnic diversity of the full-time faculty (see 1.C). While the ethnic diversity of our undergraduate student body has increased during the past several years, especially with respect to non-Caucasian U.S. students, the ethnic diversity of the full-time faculty has changed little, with the overwhelming majority of full-time faculty being White/Non-Hispanic. Efforts have been made to diversify the ethnicity of the full-time faculty. For instance, in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, the College advertised positions in sources aimed at diverse faculty candidates, such as The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education and Hispanic Outlook. Moreover, as the College sought to hire seven tenure-track faculty members in 2013-2014, the VP for Academic Affairs communicated with department chairs to suggest that, as the chairs of their search committees, they should consider a candidate's ability to connect with and motivate our underrepresented students to be a factor in reviewing candidates' credentials. More effort will be needed to diversify the ethnicity of the College's full-time faculty.

Sources

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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 operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

Illinois College's Charter and By-Laws state the Board of Trustees' authority, composition, and responsibilities as the College's governing board, and they also contain the policies and processes of the Board of Trustees and the College's administration. While Article XIII of the By-Laws states the membership, responsibilities, and composition of the faculty, the College's policies and processes concerning the faculty are contained in the Faculty Handbook, just as the College's policies and processes concerning staff are contained in the Staff Handbook. The All-College Policies Handbook is "a guide for the Illinois College community", and as such, it contains some information that also appears in the Faculty Handbook, the Staff Handbook, and the College Catalog.

Together, this collection of documents indicates that the College has established fair and ethical policies and processes that allow the Board of Trustees as well as the College's administration, faculty, and staff to operate with integrity in the College's financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions. Some examples follow.

Concerning financial integrity, Article XI of the By-Laws identifies the Board and administrative positions that have the responsibility to oversee the College's finances, including, for example, the Business Affairs Committee, the Advancement and Long Range Planning Committee, and the Audit Committee. Article XV of the By-Laws defines "conflict of interest" and clearly states that they should be avoided. The All-College Policies Handbook also discusses conflict of interest. Moreover, the College uses generally accepted accounting principles, and, as is implied by the description of the Audit Committee in Article XI, Section 10 of the By-Laws, the College undergoes an annual audit by an independent certified public accounting firm. It is shown that the College has followed this policy in 5.A.1 (under "Fiscal Resources").

Faculty have the opportunity to contribute to the financial integrity of the College by serving on two all-College committees: the Benefits Committee and the Budget Committee. The former reviews employee benefits and benefit policies and the latter helps "to promote transparency in the budget process." The list of faculty committee assignments for 2013-2014, for example, confirms that faculty members served on the Benefits Committee and the Budget Committee.

In the Faculty Handbook and the Staff Handbook, the College strives for transparency in describing its policies and processes concerning contracts, salaries, and benefits for its faculty and staff (4, 24-27,11-13).
Concerning academic integrity, the College Catalog, the Staff Handbook, and the All-College Policies Handbook make it clear that the College complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Students must give permission for their academic information to be shared with anyone other than themselves. The College's other policies and processes that foster academic integrity, including the Code of Integrity, are discussed in 2.E.

Concerning integrity in its personnel functions, the College has established fair and ethical policies and processes for its employees, and it strives for transparency in describing them. The College Catalog states that the College is an Equal Opportunity Employer, as does the Staff Handbook and the Faculty Handbook, and the All-College Policies Handbook contains the College's Nondiscrimination Policy. Hiring policies and processes for staff are discussed in the Staff Handbook, while hiring policies and processes for the faculty are discussed in the Faculty Handbook. The Office of Human Resources ensures these policies are followed, and the increases in the gender diversity of the College's full-time faculty members and in the College's administration from 2004 to 2014 (see 1.C) are two examples showing that the College has followed its fair and ethical hiring processes and acted in a manner consistent with its policy as an Equal Opportunity Employer. The College's hiring and evaluation policies and processes for staff and faculty are discussed in 3.C.2-4 and 5.A.1 (under "Human Resources").

The All-College Policies Handbook presents numerous policies and procedures, including a weapons policy and emergency procedures, aimed at securing the safety of all members of the College community. It is clear that the College is serious about following these policies and procedures. It annually conducts fire and tornado drills and, beginning in 2013-2014, a shelter-in-place drill. The All-College Policies Handbook also seeks to foster the integrity of employees' behavior through a series of transparent policies concerning issues such as alcohol and drugs, privacy, smoking, and the use of information technology and social media on campus. The greatest emphasis, however, is placed on harassment, assault, and Title IX as well as the College's Whistleblower Policy. The Title IX Coordinator has recently completed extensive training to be a certified Title IX Coordinator and oversees all investigations. There have been four investigations since January 2014. One of those investigations led to an employee's termination of employment and one led to the expulsion of a student.

Finally, the College's auxiliary functions are directed by the Office of Business Affairs, which currently oversees two auxiliary services, namely, the bookstore and dining services. The College operates with integrity in these auxiliary services by contracting these services to companies -- Follett Bookstore and Chartwells Dining Services -- that have a commitment to corporate responsibility and diversity. Since the College as a whole is committed to fundamental moral values, it is reasonable that the College's auxiliary services should be contracted to companies also committed to such values.

If members of Illinois College breach the institution's integrity code, the College responds swiftly and appropriately. In Spring 2012, pledging activities for Illinois College's Literary Societies were suspended for the year after three students were hospitalized; hazing had occurred during the new members' orientation. In response to these serious incidents, the College now conveys important information about hazing -- how to recognize, report, and stop it -- to all members of the College community via the College's website, and in Fall 2012, a new administrative position was created in Student Affairs with the specific purpose to oversee the activities of the Literary Societies: the Coordinator of Literary Societies and APO.

In the summer of 2012, it was discovered that three football coaches had violated an NCAA regulation regarding communication with prospective student-athletes; they had contacted students by text message, which was prohibited at that time. The Midwest Conference and the NCAA put the
College on probation from August 2012 to August 2015, a fact that has been indicated under the Athletics Program on the College's website. President Steuer conducted an investigation and cooperated with the Midwest Conference and the NCAA. More importantly, during her first year at the College in 2013-2014, President Farley had the College's Department of Athletics reviewed by Majeski Athletic Consulting. Following the resignation of the long-time Director of Athletics in Fall 2013, the search for a replacement in Spring 2014 made clear to candidates the importance of compliance with Midwest Conference and NCAA regulations. In addition to the College's new Director of Athletics Mike Snyder, who arrived in the summer of 2014, Meghan Roman was named Senior Compliance Officer. Since being placed on probation, the College has complied with Midwest Conference and NCAA regulations.

Finally, during the past few years, termination of employment with the College resulted for one employee who engaged in behavior unbecoming a coach and for another employee who engaged in activities that circumvented the normal financial processes of the College.

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- Trustee By-Laws (page number 15)
- Trustee By-Laws (page number 16)
- Trustee By-Laws (page number 17)
2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Argument

Illinois College presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public concerning its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships. This information is presented most comprehensively on the College's website, which contains annually updated versions of the College Catalog, Student Handbook, and Faculty Handbook as well as a wealth of other information about the College.

The College distinguishes between curricular and co-curricular programs. Curricular programs, including the BLUEprint general education program and the College's majors and minors, are described in the College Catalog and on the College's website. The requirements for these programs are included in their descriptions. The College's co-curricular programs include student life programs and the athletic program. Student life programs are described in the Student Handbook, while the athletic program is described on the College's website.

The College's faculty and staff are listed by name and the title of their position in the College Catalog, and in the Faculty/Staff Directory on the College's website, photos of faculty and staff are provided along with their name, position, department, office location, phone number, and email address.

Information concerning costs to students, including tuition, fees, and the Illinois College Net Price Calculator, are located on the College's website.

The control of the College is described in Chapter III of the Faculty Handbook. The functions of the Board of Trustees and the College's administration are discussed there. The members of the Board of Trustees are listed in the College Catalog and on the College's website. The former Presidents and the current President of the College are named in the College Catalog, and biographical and professional information is provided on the College's website, along with accompanying photos, for the President of the College and the President's Cabinet.

The College's accreditation relationships are stated in the College Catalog and on the College's website.

Sources

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board’s deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution’s internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

The Board of Trustees is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the College and to assure its integrity. The Board's deliberations and decisions reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the College; the Board considers the interests of the College's internal and external constituencies during its deliberations; the Board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors and others when such influence would not be in the College's best interest; and the Board delegates the daily management of the College to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters. Although Illinois College is historically tied to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the United Church of Christ, no church administrator controls the College's Board of Trustees.

The Board, which performs its work through committees, meets annually in October, February, and May. A review of the Board's Minutes from the past decade shows that its deliberations and decisions across different committees reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the College. For example, in February 2004, the Building and Grounds Sub-Committee of the Committee of Business Affairs approved the purchase of the College Avenue Apartments, which was projected to house 60 students, and considered the idea of constructing a new residence hall on campus as part of the College's 10-year Master Plan provided by VOA Architects and Planners of Chicago. After discussing the features of a new hall in October 2004, including the fact that it should house 200-225 students, the Building and Grounds Sub-Committee approved in February 2005 the construction of a new hall -- what eventually became Lincoln Hall -- at a maximum cost of $14 million dollars. A second example is found from February 2008 to February 2009, when the Advancement and Long Range Planning Committee oversaw a college-wide branding and marketing initiative, which, under the guidance of Mindpower Incorporated, had the desired purpose of positively affecting student recruitment and retention programs as well as fundraising activities. Phase I of this initiative resulted in the creation of the College's new wordmark ("True Blue") and the creation of the College's new logo, which was revealed to the campus community in October 2008, while Phase II resulted in a complete redesign of the College's website. As a final and more recent example, the Committee on Academic Affairs decided in February 2011 to expand the College's curriculum beyond the undergraduate level by approving the College's MAEd program, which began in Fall 2011 and graduated its first class of students in May 2014.
The Board considers the interests of the College's internal and external constituencies during its deliberations. Internally, the Board considers the views of the faculty and students. For example, the Board's Minutes from February 2010 to February 2013 show that at least one faculty resource person was present as an invited guest during each meeting of the Committee on Academic Affairs. These faculty representatives, who were sometimes the College's President of AAUP, actively contributed to the committee's discussion. Thus, of the two faculty members present in February 2010, one discussed the development of the BLUEprint, while the other discussed faculty grants. Additionally, they both spoke about the College's intention to begin a Master of Arts in Education (M.A.Ed.) Program. The Master of Arts in Education Program was again discussed by the faculty resource person in February 2013, when the program was in its second year. In addition to selected faculty members attending and participating in the Board's committee meetings and all faculty members being invited to a formal meeting of the Board's Committee on Academic Affairs once a year, an informal Trustee and Faculty Reception was instituted in February 2010. This reception, which occurs annually as part of the October or the February meeting of the Board, was arranged by the Trustees because the faculty and Trustees expressed a desire to have greater interaction with each other.

The Board also considers the views of students. For example, a review of the Board's Minutes from October 2007 to October 2010 indicates that a student resource person, namely, the President of Student Forum, was present at each meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs and that other students, such as athletes or musicians, were frequently invited to these meetings. These students actively participated in the discussion, while the Trustees listened and sometimes immediately acted on the students' suggestions. Thus, in October 2007, the Trustees took seriously a concern expressed by several athletes that a particular part-time coach should be employed full-time by the College, and in October 2010, the Committee on Student Affairs voted to raise the student activity fee after an argument in favor of such an increase was presented by the President of Student Forum.

Since the College is located in Jacksonville, Illinois, two of its immediate external constituencies are the City of Jacksonville and the residents who live near the College. In its effort to make the College a responsive and good neighbor, the Board of Trustees has considered and acted on an issue that challenges many residential colleges located in smaller cities: parking. The City of Jacksonville's 2002 Comprehensive Plan identified as an area of concern the availability of parking during the school year on the streets around the Illinois College campus. Shortly after President Steuer arrived in 2003, the College negotiated with the City of Jacksonville to close the section of Mound Avenue that ran between Lincoln Avenue and Park Street so that, as indicated by a comparison of the College's campus maps from 2004-2005 and 2014-2015, the northern portion of campus, which primarily contains academic and administrative buildings, could be seamlessly joined with the southern portion of campus, which primarily contains residential and athletic buildings. Though this produced greater unity for the College's campus, it eliminated a city street from the heart of campus where parking had been available. Yet, a comparison of the College's campus maps from 2004-2005 and 2014-2015 shows that the Board has paid attention to the concerns of the City of Jacksonville and the interests of the residents who live near the College by expanding and upgrading the College's parking facilities, adding four new parking lots on campus. For its part, in 2012 the City of Jacksonville "gave the College approximately nine parking spaces on Park Street to the East of Pixley Hall." This sequence of events over a number of years shows that the College's Board of Trustees considers the interests of the College's external constituencies and tries to make the College a responsive and good neighbor.

The College's By-Laws make clear the expectation that the members of the Board of Trustees will act with independence in their roles as Trustees so that they are not influenced by donors or others when such influence would not be in the College's best interest. According to the Preamble of the By-Laws, the governance of the College is vested in the Board of Trustees, and Article I, Section 1 of the By-Laws states that the Board's "ultimate authority is affirmed through its general, academic, and
financial policy-making functions and its responsibility for the corporation's financial health and welfare. The fiduciary responsibility of all Trustees is clear. Moreover, Article XV of the By-Laws not only defines "conflict of interest" but also states that "[a]ll Trustees shall disclose to the Board or relevant committee any possible conflict of interest at the earliest practical time." In the unlikely event that any Trustee should fail to act with independence for the College's best interest and if such failure should be discovered, Article II, Section 5 of the By-Laws makes it plain that Trustees serve at the pleasure of the Board and that any Trustee may be removed from the Board by a two-thirds vote of the Trustees.

Article VII, Sections 2 and 3 of the College's By-Laws indicate that the Board of Trustees delegates the daily management of the College to the College's administration -- first to the President of the College and then, through the President, to the President's Cabinet. Members of the Board who have questions for a particular VP are asked to bring those questions to the Board member chairing the appropriate committee rather than approaching the VP or other staff members directly. On the other hand, Article XIII, Section 2 of the By-Laws shows that the Board of Trustees expects the faculty to oversee academic matters, including prescribing courses of study and conditions of graduation. Major changes in the College's curriculum, such as the inauguration of the MAEd program mentioned above, must be approved by the faculty and then by the Board of Trustees.

Sources

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2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

Illinois College is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

In an academic context, freedom of expression means academic freedom. Article I, Section 2 of the College's By-Laws indicates that the Board of Trustees has the authority to approve policies that protect academic freedom, and the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, and the All-College Policies Handbook commit the College to academic freedom.

Academic freedom is essential for faculty members to pursue truth in their scholarship, which in turn informs their teaching and students' learning. The College supports faculty members' scholarship in various ways (see 3.B.5). There are no restrictions on faculty scholarship regarding controversial topics.

In many ways, students experience the College's commitment to academic freedom in the pursuit of truth. For example, in addition to faculty-student research projects and classroom experiences, students are exposed to a wide range of views in the College's Convocation Program, as a sample from 2013-2014 indicates. When particular topics in a Convocation Program meet with on or off-campus criticism, the College's Office of Alumni Relations and the Office of Marketing seek to explain the College's commitment to free and unfettered speech. For example, they did this in March 2011 when the Convocation Program sponsored a speaker on Abraham Lincoln as a possibly gay man. The College also offers special lectures series, such as the Japanese Studies Lecture Series from 2011-2013 and the annual Great Decisions Series, which deliberately selects topics about which people disagree. The Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholars Program annually brings one highly-respected scholar to campus, and Free Speech Week is celebrated on campus. For the past three years, the Department of Communication and Rhetorical Studies has presented a Convocation on the First Amendment. Finally, students exercise academic freedom and pursue truth through the College's Literary Societies, through student-run publications including The Rambler, which is the student newspaper, and through unique events, such as the public reading of banned books as part of Banned Books Week.

Sources

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- Trustee By-Laws
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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, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

Illinois College ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly by providing effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students, by offering students guidance in the ethical use of information resources, and by having and enforcing policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Through its Institutional Review Board, the College provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students. The Faculty Handbook describes the composition and purpose of the Institutional Review Board, while the procedures of the Institutional Review Board are explained on several links on the College's website.

The primary way the College guides students in the ethical use of information resources is through the BLUEprint. It does this through two of the BLUEprint's Embedded Experiences: Information Literacy and Ethical and Responsible Action. One of the learning outcomes of any course approved for Information Literacy is that it will help students "use information ethically and legally." In the BLUEprint, each student takes three courses approved for Information Literacy (see 3.D.5). The BLUEprint also requires students to take three courses in Ethical and Responsible Action, one of which is Communication 101 (Speech Fundamentals), the College's first-year communication course. In Communication 101, students develop abilities for ethical speaking and listening, including developing an understanding of plagiarism. Therefore, in the BLUEprint, each student is explicitly guided in the ethical use of information resources in at least four courses.

Finally, the College has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity. The Illinois College Academic Honor Code, which was created by students and reviewed and approved by the faculty in the spring of 2005, was in effect from 2005 to 2014. A review of confidential files maintained in the Office of Academic Affairs indicates that the faculty enforced the Honor Code on students and that the Judicial Board held hearings for violations of the Honor Code. For instance, from 2010-2014, faculty reported 89 violations of the Honor Code, 62 of which concerned plagiarism and 27 of which concerned cheating; depending on the circumstances, students received sanctions such as failed assignments, zeros on papers, or failures for courses. In the spring of 2014, the Illinois College Student Forum revised the Honor Code. The new code -- The Illinois College Code of Integrity -- covers both academic integrity and student life integrity and requires a separate judicial board for each, that is, an Academic Integrity Judicial Board and a Student Life Integrity Judicial Board. The faculty reviewed and approved the academic portions of the Code of Integrity in the spring of 2014, and Article V, Section 1, Subsection 2 of the Code of Integrity requires course syllabi to contain an
explicit statement about academic integrity. In this way, the College will continue to foster our students' understanding of academic honesty and integrity.

Sources

- BLUEPring_InfoLiteracy_Web
- BluePrint_EthicalResponsible_Web
- Code of Integrity2014
- Faculty Handbook 2014
- Faculty Handbook 2014 (page number 16)
- HonorCode_Web
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**2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary**

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

**Summary**

Illinois College fulfills Criterion 2, because the College has policies and processes that enable it to act with integrity and that thereby help to assure that its conduct is ethical and responsible.

**Strengths**

- The College has established fair and ethical policies and processes that allow the Board of Trustees as well as the College's administration, faculty, and staff to act with integrity in the College's financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions.
- The College presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public concerning its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.
- The College's Board of Trustees is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the College and to assure its integrity.
- The College is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.
- The College has policies and processes to ensure that its faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.
- The College responds swiftly and appropriately when the institution's integrity is breached (see 2.A).

The College commits itself to continue to exhibit integrity and pursue excellence.

**Sources**

*There are no sources.*
3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for 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

Our focus is undergraduate education: We award the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in 35 majors and 30 minors, as well as opportunities for student-designed majors. Although Illinois College is primarily an undergraduate institution, in 2011 we began a Master of Arts in Education program to serve the professional needs of area educators. All degree programs are appropriate to a liberal arts institution of higher education.

1. Assuring quality and currency of an Illinois College education is a continuous process undertaken by all faculty and staff. The faculty, led by the Office of Academic Affairs, have primary responsibility for academic courses and programs, including the structure and content of the curriculum and graduation requirements. We ensure that all programs are current through a process of curricular review and revision, discussed in 4.A.1 and 4.A.4. These processes ensure faculty control and allow for an up-to-date, quality curriculum appropriate to a selective 21st-century liberal arts college.

The BLUEprint general education program, which applies to all undergraduate students, was revised in 2008-2010 and adopted fall 2012 (see 1.A and 3.B.1-4). The Ad Hoc General Education Committee attended an AAC&U boot camp and utilized LEAP documents on theory and practice in redesigning the general education program. The revision created curricular cohesion that emphasizes interdisciplinary skills and connections across courses, making visible our underlying liberal arts mission. Additionally, we worked with the Lumina Foundation Degree Qualifications Profile (report, review) to design assessment rubrics for speaking extensive, writing extensive, and civic engagement courses (see 4.B.2).

The Education Program is accredited by the Illinois State Board of Education and meets all third-party standards. To enter the program, students must achieve a certain score on the Test of Academic Proficiency or an ACT score of 22 plus writing score of 19, as well as meet departmental requirements that surpass those expected by the State. All candidates completing Illinois College's approved teacher preparation program in elementary, secondary, and special teaching areas are
required to pass the content area test before student teaching, complete the edTPA (Teacher Performance Assessment) in their area as student teachers, and pass the Assessment of Professional Teaching test to gain licensure.

For all departments and programs, courses are current and appropriate to a challenging undergraduate education. Majors require between 32 and 48 credit hours; minors require 18 to 24 credit hours. The catalog clearly articulates the requirements for each major and minor and presents brief course descriptions on individual program pages. Examples of recent revisions to update programs and courses to align with current best practices include:

- Revisions in the Modern Languages department, including the creation (fall 2011) of a major/minor in Japanese Studies, with concentrations in Language or Culture and Society, and new courses in French to add Francophone culture, including Sub-Saharan African Literature and Cinema and France and Immigration (fall 2010).
- The addition of courses in Graphic Design to the Art curriculum (fall 2012).
- A new minor in Entrepreneurship offered by the Economics department (fall 2013).
- A new minor in Fine Arts Administration (fall 2014).

Illinois College began in 2011 to offer the Master of Arts in Education degree (Assessment Report 2013). The Master of Arts in Education Graduate Program Handbook clearly demonstrates a program designed at the graduate level for professional educators. The faculty discussed at length and still monitors, as it approves new courses, the appropriate level of curriculum and performance for the M.A.Ed. degree. The Master of Arts in Education degree program is a 32-credit, on-campus program. It was approved by the HLC in February 2012; the October 2011 HLC site visit report commends its "cohesive curriculum" (page 9). The program was developed by a committee examining best practices in current higher education pedagogy and comparable M.A.Ed. programs in Central Illinois, and by assessing the needs of local educators. Courses in the program demonstrate curricular currency. The program culminates in a capstone "action research project." The Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile is embedded within the M.A.Ed. assessment plan. Thus the master's program is appropriate, up-to-date, and offering flexible content aligned with the needs of its students.

Illinois College uses assessment data, discussed in 4.B, to ensure that students perform at the appropriate level.

2. Learning goals for the undergraduate program are clearly articulated in "The Undergraduate Academic Program" introduction of the Catalog. The specific graduation requirements for all undergraduate students follow this statement and clearly state credit hour, residency, grade point average, satisfactory progress, and other requirements. Students must complete satisfactorily at least 120 semester hours of academic credit, with the semester hour representing the unit of credit and complying with the Education Department's guidelines. These general graduation requirements are commensurate with undergraduate requirements nationally. One unique component is that Illinois College undergraduates are required to attend 30 convocations: this supports our educational mission by exemplifying learning opportunities outside the classroom and exposing students to diverse ideas via speakers and performances. For example, in Fall 2013, students could earn convocation credit for an Eboo Patel lecture on interfaith leadership, a lecture by J. Winston Porter on energy alternatives, and a performance by jazz singer Debbie Lennon.

General Education BLUEprint requirements and learning goals are clearly stated in the Catalog available on the website and in paper form, and additional information and tools (such as this grid) are available for students via their individualized advising portals on the Connect2 website. The BLUEprint was designed to scaffold exploring and demonstrating liberal arts objectives and the skills
21-st century employers want, including communication and critical thinking. See 1.A.

In addition to the BLUEprint general education learning goals, each disciplinary program articulates its learning goals in the description stated in the course catalog. Each is appropriate to its specific discipline but supports the institution's overall learning goals, stated above (see, for instance, Psychology and Chemistry). In addition, all programs differentiate learning outcome goals in their assessment plans (see 4.B.1). Thus, all Illinois College graduates should matriculate with a set of broad skills that have been applied and tested in the specific disciplines they have selected as majors and minors. Learning objectives for individual courses are articulated on syllabi, as required by the faculty handbook and demonstrated in this random sample of syllabi from 2013-2014.

The learning goals for the M.A.Ed. program are articulated in the catalog description and further elaborated on the website. Learning goals for individual courses are articulated on syllabi. These goals are differentiated from the bachelor's program in Education through a focus on advanced competencies, the integration of professional experience, and higher levels of communication. The admissions process for the program, discussed in the Graduate Handbook and available on the website, ensures candidates have the potential to perform at the appropriate level to meet these learning goals.

3. Program quality and learning goals are consistent and centralized in one location. We are a residential college with a single campus; however, we do offer combined degree programs in engineering, occupational therapy, and medical technology. In each case, the student completes the same required general education and major coursework as other Illinois College students in an intensive three year program of study and must be admitted to the cooperating accredited institution. For each program, students must successfully complete coursework at the cooperating university before being granted their Illinois College degree. This ensures a consistent experience and set of expectations for students.

Currently we offer no online courses or programs, although faculty have begun discussing the role of online education at the encouragement of the Dean, responding to a grant opportunity from the Council of Independent Colleges. All instruction is currently residential, although students can earn course credit through supervised internships coordinated with their departments and Career Services. To ensure quality learning content, students complete an internship learning contract with stated learning goals and a supervising faculty member who assesses their work. "Trip courses" and BreakAways are taught by Illinois College faculty in an on-campus classroom setting before the experiential learning travel portion. Independent Studies are likewise governed by a standard set of expectations to ensure a consistent amount and quality of work per credit hour. See 4.A.2 and 4.A.3 on the process by which the college ensures consistent quality of accepted dual-credit and transfer credit.

Sources

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The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. 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. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution’s mission.

Argument

1-4. Illinois College is dedicated to the exercise of intellectual inquiry and to inculcating in our students knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge, as shown in our mission statement (see 1.A). As a Phi Beta Kappa liberal arts institution, we seek to provide students with the skills they will need to succeed in their chosen fields while instilling in them a lifelong love of learning and a desire to lead and serve their communities. Illinois College is an Higher Learning Commission Cohort 3 Pioneer Institution in the Pathways Project testing the Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile; our project demonstrates a commitment to offering programs at the appropriate level of challenge and expectation, as recognized by HLC.

The BLUEprint was designed to maximize the potential of a liberal arts' education offering bachelor's degrees. All undergraduate students must fulfill the general education requirements, and all programs require students to collect, analyze and communicate information via the capstone course and embedded experiences in courses in the major (see 1.A). This grid shows the extensive and still-growing list of courses satisfying BLUEprint requirements. The purpose, content, and intended learning outcomes are clearly stated in the BLUEprint General Education document (January 2015). They are also summarized on the College website and in the catalog and are widely available for students and transfer students. The Educational Policy Committee has recommended a number of small changes to the BLUEprint as we have carried out its implementation since fall 2012, as shown in this document. These changes are approved by the faculty and incorporated into the Catalog language each year. See 4.B for a discussion of ongoing assessment.

Cultural diversity is recognized at multiple points within the BLUEprint (see 1.C). Many students also engage more immediately with diversity in the local community through the Community/Civic Engagement requirement. For example, issues related to diverse experience based on race/ethnicity occur while working with children at 8 Points Charter School, Big Brothers Big Sisters, the Sonya
Project (a mentor-based reading program focused on the lowest performing local public schools). Students in different courses also have had the opportunity to learn about individuals with disabilities while engaged in community-based projects with the Jacksonville Area Center for Independent Living. The issue of social class is very apparent while serving at Jacksonville Food Center and New Directions homeless shelter, but students are also confronted with the diversity of social class in every experience already mentioned.

The educational goals of the BLUEprint are supported by multiple campus offices, creating an integrated educational environment where skills and knowledge do not belong in one isolated classroom or discipline. For instance, the Community Engagement and Service Learning components are supported by the Coordinator of Community Engagement in the Center for Student Involvement in Student Affairs and by a Coordinator of Civic Engagement in the Al Habtoor Leadership Center; the Campus Writing Center supports faculty developing Writing Extensive Experience courses and is available to all students working on papers, with roughly 40-hours per week of student or faculty consultants available; the Speech Communications Center, opened in Fall 2011, provides practical advice and suggestions for improving presentations. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion provides programming contributing to cultural awareness and the retention of minority students, and supports the U.S. Diversity component of the curriculum; and the Office of Religious Life's programming offers another venue for Spiritual Inquiry. In August 2014 the faculty passed legislation creating policy for how students could earn BLUEprint experience in non-classroom activities.

5. Faculty and students contribute to the creation and sharing of knowledge. Faculty are encouraged to engage students in research in all disciplines. A Faculty-Student Research Fund provides competitive support for student research as well as for students to attend conferences to present their findings. A subset of the Senate, the Dean's Advisory Committee, considers requests for funding in conjunction with the Dean following guidelines established in 2004. In FY2014, 17 faculty and 47 students used student-faculty research funds in excess of $31,400. In 2013-2014, students conducted research and attended conferences with faculty in biology, Spanish, math, music, theatre, chemistry, psychology, history, sociology, finance, economics, education, and communications. Illinois College has made a concerted effort to increase funding for student-faculty research and to grow participation; the 2006-2011 NSSE data reflects the success of this effort, with 33% of 2011 seniors reporting that they planned to do or had done a student/faculty research project. Our 2014 NSSE results show student averages significantly higher than our comparative group for seniors reporting participating in two-or-more high impact practices, including research with faculty (91% of Illinois College seniors vs. 73% of comparison group).

In 2011, the college established an annual Celebration of Excellence devoted to recognizing academic accomplishment; classes are cancelled and the day is devoted to academic-conference style presentations and poster sessions by students and fine arts showcases. The number of student proposals for the Celebration of Excellence has increased (from 58 in 2011 to 80 in 2014), as has the number of presentations, individual student presenters, majors represented, and attendees, indicating a growing culture of student research (see chart for participation data). Recipients of academic awards, including inductees into Phi Beta Kappa, are also recognized.

In addition to the annual Celebration of Excellence, some classes and individual departments share the results of student research with the larger community throughout the year, including exhibits by senior art majors, readings by senior creative writers, student-directed one-act plays from Theatre majors, and the Public Speaking Showcase featuring the best persuasive speeches from the speech fundamentals course. The Campus Writing Center sponsors an annual Illinois College Undergraduate
Conference of Writers "to celebrate writing from across the curriculum." In these and other ways, undergraduate student research and academic achievement are supported.

Students in the M.Ed. program work with faculty on individual capstone research projects and have opportunities to share results among their cohort. They can also apply for student-faculty research funds for off-campus presentation. In the 2013-2014 academic year, as the first cohort completed their degrees, each student presented their research to an audience of professors and students (see sample paper, PowerPoint).

In addition to their work with students, faculty create and share knowledge (2013-2014 participation rates). Scholarly and professional achievement are a part of annual faculty assessment by the Dean and periodic review for Retention, Tenure and Promotion detailed in the Faculty Handbook. Currently an Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Expectations is exploring faculty research expectations and resources and leading faculty discussion on the issue. This scholarly and professional work is supported by faculty development funds (participation rates 2012-2013). Recent examples of faculty creating and sharing knowledge include a book by Associate Professor of History Jenny Barker-Devine, a book chapter by Adrienne Hacker Daniels, professor of Communication and Rhetorical Studies, a journal article by Brent Chandler, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, and the premier of an award-winning musical composition by Professor of Music Timothy Kramer. In addition to sharing creative work and research with the wider disciplines, faculty have several venues to share with the community, such as opinion columns written by Steve Hochstadt (History) and Nick Capo (English) for the local newspaper, or the blog Caryn Riswold (Religion) contributes to Patheos.com. On campus, a Faculty Symposium program has allowed faculty to share their research with each other in an informal atmosphere for many years, averaging twelve presentations every academic year.

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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 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; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.

2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

4. 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.

5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Argument

Illinois College faculty and staff ensure a quality curricular and co-curricular program.

1. Illinois College employs an appropriate number, quality, and continuity of faculty to fulfill pedagogical, supervisory, assessment, and governance duties. In order to ensure the highest quality faculty and increase continuity, Illinois College made a conscious choice several years ago to, whenever possible, increase the number of full-time and tenure line faculty and decrease adjunct and part-time faculty, as shown in this 2013 Fact Book chart. In the fall of 2013 we reported 83 full time faculty and 20 part time faculty. This chart shows the increase in faculty by department since fall 2009.

Faculty responsibilities are clearly addressed in the Faculty Handbook. Faculty control the content of their individual courses, as overseen by departments, and assess the performance of students within those courses; departments control the requirements for the major, as approved by the larger faculty, and assess the performance of students in departmental courses on selected indicators; and the faculty as a whole approves the general education program, academic policies, and graduation requirements, and assesses whether the overall academic program is meeting stated goals. Faculty effectively control the curriculum and approve students for graduation.

Faculty generally serve on two committees, indicating sufficient numbers to exercise non-classroom responsibilities as well as classroom roles. The Faculty Handbook defines committee composition and duties. The faculty governance structure includes committees designed to oversee the curriculum, student performance, and assessment.

- The Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) reviews proposals that affect the curriculum and makes recommendations to the faculty. The documents and approved minutes for the March 2014 Faculty Meeting show how CRC policy is presented and approved.
• The **Educational Policies Committee** (EPC) reviews petitions from students, faculty, departments, and divisions, and considers other matters of educational policy. This committee oversees student performance by ruling on individual petitions for exemptions from college policies and by revising existing educational policies.

• The **Faculty Assessment Committee** analyzes and responds to departmental assessment reports and guides the faculty in assessment. See 4.B.

2. All instructors are appropriately credentialed, as demonstrated in this random sample of faculty CVs and transcripts. Of FT faculty, **82.7%** had a terminal degree and **58%** are tenured (2014 Fact Sheet). Faculty degrees are publicly listed in the [Catalog](#), and individual faculty CVs are held in the Office of Human Resources. The hiring process is described in Chapter VII of the Faculty Handbook, which states, regarding credentials, "ordinarily, only persons with terminal degrees from accredited universities will be eligible for tenure-track appointments. Only persons with terminal degrees from accredited universities will be eligible for tenure. ... Non-tenure-track appointments may be offered to individuals lacking terminal degrees" (38-39). In addition to the appropriate academic credentials, search committees seek out candidates with liberal arts experience and evidence of excellent teaching. The hiring process for faculty is further articulated under "guidelines for faculty searches" on the website page for department chairs. Department faculty create job advertisements in conjunction with the Dean, and lead and constitute search committees for tenure-track lines; department chairs are responsible for hiring part-time faculty.

3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional procedures. The faculty evaluation process is addressed in Chapter VI of the Faculty Handbook. Faculty are assessed on teaching, professional development, and service. Students complete anonymous online course evaluations at the end of each course, and also fill out an advisor evaluation when changing advisors or graduating. These are used for both formative and summative evaluation in conjunction with other evidence. Many inputs are used to evaluate instructors, including data from students, department chairs, and, in the case of a tenure or promotion review, letters from colleagues and (optional) external disciplinary specialists. All full-time faculty complete an annual self-assessment and submit it, with an updated CV, to their department chair and dean of the faculty (random sample); chairs conduct annual evaluations of all departmental faculty, including part-time and temporary replacement faculty, and submit either a letter or form to the dean. Department chairs/program coordinators meet annually with the dean to discuss these evaluations. Chairs are also annually evaluated anonymously by faculty in their departments via a form. All faculty meet bi-annually with the dean.

The college follows a process to conduct formal reviews for retention, tenure and promotion (see Faculty Handbook Chapter X and XI). For tenure-track faculty these occur in the fall of the second, third and fifth year (retention) and sixth year (for promotion from assistant to associate) by the Retention, Tenure and Promotion Committee. Full-time continuing appointment (non-tenure track) faculty are reviewed in the spring of their second year and every alternating two years hence unless under review for promotion. In each instance, faculty submit a portfolio of evidence to support their case, which includes information on their teaching, professional development, and service. Guidelines are provided by the Retention, Tenure and Promotion Committee. A process for appealing negative decisions was revised and approved in 2014. Additionally, an Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Expectations was established in fall 2013 to research faculty expectations at peer institutions, organize faculty dialogue, and synthesize results to present suggested changes to
handbook language. This committee has led discussion of the issue at the 2014 opening faculty conference and several special faculty meetings.

4. The college supports excellent teaching and professional development in a variety of ways. The faculty handbook and website detail resources for course enrichment and professional development funds available. All faculty have funds for Professional Development ($500) and Travel ($600, plus $350 additional if presenting or chairing at a conference). The dean's office oversees these funds, with the faculty-led Resource Allocation Committee reviewing appeals. As the dean's summary chart to the Trustees shows, in 2012-2013, almost $41,000 was spent by 86 faculty on professional development expenses; 58 faculty used their travel money to attend conferences, with 30 of those also presenting; and 27 faculty spent over $6,000 for course enrichment.

In addition, faculty can apply to endowed awards that provide grants allocated on a competitive basis for research or pedagogical enrichment. In 2012-2013, 14 faculty won awards, and 12 won faculty collaboration grants, for a total of over $53,000. In 2013-2014, 25 faculty won awards and two faculty won a collaboration grant, totaling over $59,000.

Tenured faculty are expected to take a sabbatical leave after each six years of full-time teaching and are given a semester at full-pay or a year at half-pay, providing further support to engage in intensive pedagogical revision and professional research. Faculty submit sabbatical proposals which are reviewed and approved by the dean and a faculty committee. All proposals were approved in the past eight years, although some faculty were required to clarify and revise before approval. For instance, in 2012-2013, six faculty members took sabbatical leave; five of the six proposed projects that would keep them current in their fields, while all six proposals included components related to improved pedagogy. Faculty submit a written report on productivity upon sabbatical completion (sample proposal, approval letter, report).

The Office of Academic Affairs funds attendance annually for four faculty in the Midwest Faculty Seminar series at the University of Chicago, allowing faculty participation in seminars on a variety of topics in higher education with colleagues from other liberal arts institutions.

In 2012-2013, 86 individual faculty used professional development funds of over $311,000. The college has processes in place to allocate these funds, which allow faculty to continue to grow in their teaching and research. Additionally, the dean's office provides support on an ad hoc basis when necessary. For example, the dean recently provided support to two newly-hired science faculty to attend meetings of the Consortium for Undergraduate Research, and to a series of faculty at all ranks to attend conferences focused on e-portfolios. At the highest level, Illinois College supports and provides resources for faculty development, as evidenced by the 2011 Realizing the Vision plan, where the Board approved significant money to support a series of summer pedagogy workshops for faculty to enhance the transition to the new BLUEprint general education program.

Other non-monetary resources are available for supporting faculty pedagogical and professional development. The Faculty Symposium series offers an informal space for faculty to share new research (averaging six a semester). For new tenure-track faculty, topics such as pedagogy and research in an Illinois College context are addressed in the Faculty Mentoring Program, which pairs new faculty with an established, tenured faculty mentor for a year. This program began Fall 2007 with a grant from the Lilly Fellows Program. Since then, across five cohorts, thirty-two faculty in their first or second year at Illinois College have participated.
In addition to internal funds and programs, faculty enjoy the use of the college grant writer to help with writing grants for external funding sources. For example, Professor Lawrence Zettler (Biology) has earned grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services for orchid research in which he involves undergraduates, and Professor Jeremy Alm used a grant from the Educational Advancement Foundation to design a course in metric space topology.

A series of external grants have funded workshops to enrich faculty pedagogy and professional development. For example, the college recently received a $50,000 grant from the Council of Independent Colleges for a NetVUE Holistic Advising program with 24 participating faculty in 2014-2015. From 2009-2013, 65 individual faculty participated in pedagogical development workshops, including a series of summer technology workshops funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. These external grants support and recognize the ongoing work of the faculty to keep current in their disciplines and pedagogy.

5. With an 11:1 student/faculty ratio, Illinois College faculty enjoy close contact with students and are readily accessible for student inquiry. Advising is viewed as a form of teaching by the Retention, Tenure and Promotion Committee, and faculty advise students at all stages of their academic career. First-Year Seminar Learning Community faculty advise students in their learning communities until they declare a major, at which point a faculty member in the major is assigned. Students enjoy access to faculty inside and outside of class; faculty are required to hold a minimum of "three publicly announced office hours per week" (Faculty Handbook 26), while "part-time instructors are expected to be available to students outside of class at regularly scheduled times at least one half-hour weekly for each three hours of instruction and at other times by appointment" (41). Students can also contact faculty via phone, email, and in some cases, text. Our first-years’ and seniors’ ratings of the quality and frequency of their student-faculty interactions compare favorably to those of their counterparts at our comparison institutions that administered NSSE during the 2013 or 2014 administrations (see pages 10-11, 15-19).

In addition to contact with students via teaching, advising, supervising student research, and supervising student employees (who serve as department workers, tutors, writing center consultants, etc.), many faculty advise student organizations such as the Student Senate, accounting club, disciplinary honor societies, Amnesty International, and Quidditch club. A Resource Guide familiarizes faculty and staff to best practices in advising student organizations. In addition, a Faculty-Athletics Coalition was established in 2012 "to provide support for student-athletes and to foster a greater awareness of the teaching and learning that occurs in this co-curricular endeavor. We believe that increased interaction among faculty, coaches, and student-athletes within the context of intercollegiate athletic activities will lead to greater academic success for the student-athletes and enhance understanding of how participating in varsity athletics serves the mission of Illinois College." Fifteen faculty members paired with 18 teams in 2013-2014.

For the M.A.Ed. program, the Graduate Committee for the Master of Arts in Education supervises the credentials of faculty who teach in that program. As stated in Appendix A of the Graduate Committee Handbook, faculty must have the appropriate terminal degree to qualify for full graduate faculty status, although faculty recommended by the department chair and approved by the graduate committee who hold a master's degree and special expertise may be approved for Associate Graduate Faculty Status. The role of full and associate members is explained in Appendix A. Graduate Faculty follow the Faculty Handbook for expectations on accessibility, advising, professional development opportunities, and other matters. The M.A.Ed. program maintains a small cohort of students (12 in first cohort, four in second cohort, two in third cohort), ensuring faculty/student contact and optimal
6. At Illinois College, faculty and staff work closely together to ensure the quality of the educational experience. Faculty aid in establishing the academic credentials for instructional staff by serving on search committees for positions related to student support, such as Director for Diversity and Inclusion.

All staff positions are filled through a hiring process managed by the Department of Human Resources in the Office of Business Affairs. All searches are reviewed by the Cabinet and approved by the President. Illinois College charges the supervisor with reviewing and revising the position description to ensure the most up-to-date duties are reflected and minimum qualifications necessary for carrying out the essential job functions are listed. The supervisor works closely with the Director of Human Resources. The Office of Human Resources advertises the position on the college website and in relevant print publications and forwards all resumes to the hiring supervisor for review. The hiring supervisor is responsible for overseeing resume screening, determining applicant qualifications based on the minimum qualifications for the position and checking references on finalists. The Office of Human Resources verifies degrees using transcripts provided by the candidate (as this random sample demonstrates) and a background screening vendor.

The college seeks candidates with appropriate qualifications for each position. For instance, we recently completed the search for a new Director of the Center for Academic Excellence and TRiO Student Support Services.

Illinois College has hired highly-qualified staff members to provide student support services. The Dean of Students holds a Ph.D. In the Center for Academic Excellence and TRiO Student Support Services, academic counselors hold master's degrees (Psychology with a concentration in Counseling; Communication Studies); the library director holds a Ph.D., while the reference, outreach, circulation, and digital services librarians hold master's degrees (Library Science; English); student affairs professionals hold the master's degree (Counseling and Student Personnel; Communications); professional staff in Residence Life hold the M. Ed.; the Chaplain an M.Div; Health Services employ a full-time R.N. and C.N.P. as well as a contracted (part-time) certified family physician; the counseling center employs a licensed clinical social worker and a clinician with a Master's of Clinical Psychology; and the three professional staff in Career Services hold M.A. degrees. The Director, Associate Director, and Assistant Director of Financial Aid all hold Bachelor's Degrees, and between them have 51 years of experience in Financial Aid at Illinois College.

Staff members providing student support services are appropriately trained and supported in their professional development. See 5.A. The college also offers formal training for those new staff expected to utilize intensively our enterprise-wide database, Jenzabar. For example, a new administrative assistant in the Office of Academic Affairs took a three-day course on writing reports from Jenzabar data, and eight staff from five different offices attended the annual Jenzabar conference in spring 2014.

Illinois College strongly encourages continual staff learning. Funds are budgeted to departments for professional development. Employees are able to attend continuing education and professional development events during business hours without having to request paid time off, provided they and their supervisors can arrange alternate ways for them to complete the requirements of their positions. Staff members who hold professional certificates complete continuing education courses as requirements to renew certification. For instance, the RN and CNP complete continuing education
hours to maintain licensure, and annually attend the American College Health Association National Conference; the Career Services professional staff complete 1-to-2 webinars per year on topics such as career coaching, recruiting trends, and federal hiring, and they attended training and became certified in the StrengthsQuest program (spring 2014).

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and 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 programs 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, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution’s offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Argument

Illinois College is devoted to student success and provides support for student learning and effective teaching. Our increasing success at providing a supportive campus environment is evidenced by this chart reflecting student responses on the National Survey of Student Engagement since 2006 and recent CLA data.

1. In fall 2014, Illinois College reported a student population that was 48.9% first generation, 35.6% low-income, and 24.1% both first generation and low-income. This group has slightly increased over the last five years. Recognizing the distinct needs of this student population and the retention challenges they often present, the college began an Early Intervention Group in 2006 to identify individual at-risk students and sought funding to establish a center to centralize resources for promoting academic success. The Center for Academic Excellence opened in 2008 to serve students and faculty; it oversees TRiO and the Yates Fellowship Program. In 2010, the TRiO Program was established to support first generation and low income students. The Center reports having served 400 total students in 2013-2014. The programs provide academic, personal, financial, and career counseling targeted to student needs, as well as study tables, supplemental instruction, and special workshops. The TRiO Program facilitates communication between students and faculty as well as on-campus job placement. Since 2008, eighteen first-generation TRiO-eligible students are invited yearly to participate in the Yates Fellowship Program, a two-week summer bridge program designed to facilitate the successful integration of first-year, first-generation students to the academic and social culture of the college. Originally funded in 2008 by a $100,000 CIC/Walmart College Success Awards grant, Yates offers coursework in math and writing as well as an opportunity to build a sense of community and purpose.

Illinois College has significantly increased its enrollment of domestic minority and international students in the last ten years. Our ethnic minority enrollment grew from 6.4% in fall 2004 to 25.4% in fall 2014, while international student enrollment grew from 12 students in fall 2004 to 32 in fall 2014. See 1.C for a discussion of initiatives to meet the needs of domestic minority students. To meet the needs of international students, The Office of Study Abroad and BreakAway, founded in 2004, has developed and expanded its handbook and orientation for International students. The Director of
Study Abroad and BreakAways is a second official advisor for all international students.

The college also recognizes other forms of diversity and provides support to students in accordance with our Affirmation of Community Responsibility charge to “Foster tolerance and respect in our community.” Straights and Gays for Equality (SAGE) is an active student organization increasing awareness of LGBTQ issues on campus. Faculty and staff can receive "Safe Zone" training to create welcome environments to students of all sexual orientations. Illinois College also recognizes that students and other members of the community hold diverse religious affiliations, and the Office of Religious Life welcomes students of all faiths and denominations. The College Chaplain offers a weekly ecumenical service and facilitates a Catholic mass, and aids students of other faiths find worship services. A recent partnership with the Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) further supports religious diversity. Work with the IFYC is a top priority for the President, as it presents an excellent opportunity to help faculty and students learn to discuss religious and other forms of diversity. IFYC Staff helped us evaluate the campus structure for such dialogues and identified the Leadership Program as the core area promoting interfaith conversations. The President and Dean are working with additional faculty to add interfaith components to courses. Fifteen faculty met with the IFYC staff in summer 2014; a Communications professor attended a one-week seminar run by Eboo Patel in August 2014; and the President led a team with two faculty to an IFYC conference in September 2014.

99% of our students receive financial aid, and they are supported by the Financial Aid office. The staff work to meet the financial needs of students and to educate students on resources and long-term financial literacy. In addition, 45% of students worked on campus in 2013-2014; they are served by the Student Work Office, housed in the Office of Career Services. On-campus jobs are supervised by faculty and staff, who follow guidelines. The mission of the Office of Career Services is to help students and alumni integrate their liberal arts education into their career planning, to develop students who are sure of their values, aware of their skills, and prepared for life in a changing employment market. Career Services offers both walk-in and scheduled appointment times, coordinates internships, provides career advising and resume workshops, and organizes trips to job fairs.

The College provides multiple academic support services to all students, including the Campus Writing Center, the Speech Communication Center, and the Center for Academic Excellence (see 3.B.1-4).

The Language Laboratory supports students enrolled in Modern Language courses and inspires innovative pedagogies. The lab is equipped with 32 student computer stations -- state-of-the-art desktop computers with WebCams, large monitors and appropriate software (including word processing with language tools and keyboard support for French, German, Japanese and Spanish word processing, several foreign language textbook or Internet software packages, Skype and associated software for recording international conversations, classroom management software, digital video editing equipment, and full multimedia capabilities). The laboratory is equipped with headsets, digital projectors, speakers and DVD/Blu-ray players for classroom presentations, as well as a collection of reference books and other pedagogical materials in each language. The laboratory is supervised by a faculty Director and staffed by 16 trained student Laboratory Assistants from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday-Friday, with evening hours on Sunday. Each course in Modern Languages meets one or more days per week in the Language Laboratory. In recent years the Laboratory has been used for innovative language pedagogies such as Skype conversations between Illinois College students and students at foreign universities, or the creation of foreign language digital videos and presentations.

The College supports students with mental health needs. The Templeton Counseling Center offers individual and group therapy as well as crisis intervention and referrals. It is staffed by a Licensed
Clinical Social Worker and Mental Health Counselor/ADA Coordinator; services are free to students. Templeton Counseling Center plays an integral role in the mission of Illinois College to develop the students’ qualities of mind and character. The Center is dedicated to providing students with psychological support as they pursue their goals, and to collaborating with them in the acquisition of the psychosocial and emotional skills that will enable them to grow and develop throughout their lives. The Center advocates for students’ needs and supports the efforts of the faculty and staff by providing programs which enhance the quality of campus life, such as mindfulness meditation and stress management. Fifteen percent of the student population sought counseling in 2013-2014; 83% were able to be seen for an initial assessment on the same day or within two days of their seeking an appointment. The College has contracted with the Center for Psychiatric Health for psychiatric and additional psychotherapy services.

The Student Disability Services office, staffed by a counselor devoting half of her time to this office and serving as ADA Coordinator, supports students with disabilities, including Individualized Education Program accommodations. In spring 2014, 40 students used these services, with 93% earning a GPA of 2.0 or higher. Student Disability Services also identifies resources to address students’ accommodation needs. New policies and forms (e.g. Foreign Language Exemption Request) as well as "Tips and Handouts" (e.g. "How to be your own self advocate") have helped educate students on available accommodations, and a new faculty resource manual, policies, and forms are provided to faculty.

Health Services provides culturally-sensitive primary medical care for acute medical illnesses and injuries. The clinic has an average of 2200 patient contacts per year. The clinic aims to reduce health impediments to academic performance and promote wellness through education regarding healthy lifestyles, public health initiatives, and other topics. For instance, Health Services has spearheaded efforts to reduce alcohol and drug use on campus in order to support students in making healthier choices, which can have a direct effect on student success. The attached document highlights initiatives in the last ten years to meet the needs of students and demonstrates a commitment to supporting students and the academic environment.

Service is a key component to the mission of the college; see 1.D. Multiple offices, including the Coordinator of Community Engagement in Student Affairs, provide support for student volunteerism. Nearly every service opportunity provides some type of experiential learning opportunity. We continue to seek the optimal structure for integrating and reflecting on service learning: from 2011-2014, a faculty member received a course release as Director of Service Learning, with the charge to assist faculty in developing service learning courses. Currently a staff member is the Coordinator of Community Engagement and Service.

Residence Life also serves a student support capacity. Three full-time staff provide several weeks of training every August for student staff on topics such as leadership and supervision, emergency procedures, community building, time management, conflict resolution, sexual harassment, mental health, diversity, sexual assault support, and alcohol/drug awareness. A Resident Assistant is on duty every night from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. and a Hall Director is always on duty. Living on campus helps students become more involved in campus life and helps new students adjust to college, which ultimately helps persistence.

Significantly, our first-year experience program includes student affairs professionals working with faculty and a student Connections leader on a mentoring team for each First Year Seminar. The student affairs professionals lead a series of Strategies for Academic Success sessions such as time management and healthy choices. By being integrated into the Learning Community, they also develop initial relationships with first-year students. Another example of partnering between
Academic and Student Affairs is the co-advising of the Student Senate by a faculty member and the Dean of Students.

2. According to the registrar, 99% of incoming first-year students attend an "IC Connections Orientation" session in the summer prior to the first year. Before attending, they take online placement exams for math and modern languages and submit a list of preferred courses. This information, along with their ACT scores and high school transcripts, is used by the Registrar's Office to "pre-load" a partial schedule. At the orientation, faculty members meet individually with students to discuss and complete the fall schedule, with students able to change all pre-loaded courses if they wish. This process helps direct entering students to courses for which they are prepared. We began this "scheduling to strengths" initiative in 2006 at the advice of the Chair of the Early Intervention Group, who had confirmed that ACT's college readiness benchmarks mirrored our internal data and could be used to construct lower-risk schedules. In addition to using the placement exam to position students in the appropriate level of math and language course, faculty discuss the IC 103 1-credit success strategies course with TRiO eligible students. If a student's ACT English score is below the benchmark of 18, and a student demonstrates lack of confidence in their writing ability, faculty alert them to English 104, a 4-credit Writing and Revising Studio course that can usually be taken concurrently with the required Principles of Writing course. Illinois College does not have a remedial level of courses.

Until the 2014-2015 academic year, transfer students attended an orientation session designed for their needs. Now, we sponsor "Transfer Days" on which a prospective transfer student can complete registration. The Admissions Office compiled advising sheets created by departments specifically for transfer students. Transfer students construct an appropriate schedule with the guidance of the Associate Director of Admissions and/or the Registrar. In December 2014, the faculty adopted legislation creating a transfer-student seminar to begin fall 2015. This seminar will aid transfer students in making connections between courses at Illinois College and their previous institutions, integrate students' learning into the BLUEprint, and provide a community for new transfer students.

Students in the M.A.Ed. program are conditionally admitted to the program until they have successfully completed eight credit hours. They work with the Graduate Coordinator to complete a graduate study plan and degree plan. The required courses are then scaffolded (including research methods and principles of measurement) to ensure adequate preparation for the capstone experience.

3. Academic advising is an extension of teaching and is conducted by faculty. Entering students are advised by one of the faculty in their First-Year Learning Community. Faculty who teach first-year seminars receive training every year at a one-day workshop conducted by the co-directors of IC Connections on advising first-year students on the BLUEprint general education program, time management, and the transition to college. Once a student declares a major, a faculty member in that department is assigned as their advisor. This facilitates relevant career and graduate school advising. Staff members such as TRiO counselors may also provide advising in coordination with the faculty advisor. To ensure quality academic advising, in 2008 the college began student evaluation of advising (when students declare a major, graduate, or leave the college). Currently 24 faculty are voluntarily engaged in a year-long NetVUE Holistic Advising workshop to explore advising for vocation (that is, how to help a student align their education with a reflection on their "calling," goals and purpose). These faculty include nearly every faculty member teaching a Learning Community in
Students in the M.A.Ed. program are advised by the Graduate Coordinator.

4. Illinois College provides the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning. See also 5.A.1.

**Information Technology:** The college has seven campus computer labs, several open 24-hours daily, available to students and staff. Lab computers offer Microsoft Suite, internet access, and other programs. Advancements have been made in classroom technology in recent years to assist newer pedagogies, and many classrooms are equipped with ceiling-mounted projectors and computer stations; other classrooms have Promethean Boards or Epson whiteboards. Currently 67.9% of classrooms are "smart," improved from 39.6% in Fall 2012. Wireless access is available throughout campus. The department has a professional staff of six and employs student workers. Technical support is offered through a Help Desk, a Sharepoint website, and individual consultation. IT supports Moodle, Google.docs, and other pedagogical programs. It offers equipment such as digital cameras and video cameras for check-out. In 2009, the college received a $100,000 Mellon Foundation grant for a 3-year program of summer workshops involving 36 faculty who learned to incorporate information literacy into assignments and classroom learning.

Scientific laboratories are housed in Parker Science Building, built in 2002. The 44,000 square foot building contains offices, classrooms, a computer lab, lounge space, and lab space for biology, chemistry, environmental studies, math, and physics. A laboratory manager oversees lab set-up and serves as Chemical Hygiene Officer.

In 2008 the College entered a partnership with Starhill Forest Arboretum, 45 minutes east of campus in Petersburg, Illinois. The 48-acre arboretum is home to North America's largest living reference collection for the genus *Quercus*, as certified by the American Public Gardens Association's North American Plant Collection Consortium. The Arboretum has served as an internship site since 2005, with 31 Illinois College students participating. Teamwork is emphasized as students gain a broad range of experience in plant identification, plant propagation and maintenance, safe tool and equipment operation, data collection, GIS mapping, invasive species management, and integrated pest management. The Arboretum's field lab is used for class meetings and instruction. Faculty in biology, communications, writing, environmental studies, economics, and math have utilized the arboretum for their classes. Arboretum staff also lecture and consult on campus.

While the institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning in the sciences, this is also an area of challenge. The growing popularity of STEM majors exerts pressure on existing lab space and scheduling (For instance, 23 biology majors in 2009 has grown to 50 in 2013). External reviews of Biology, Chemistry, and Environmental Studies were helpful in identifying challenges (see 4.A.1). Increased enrollment and multiple labs occurring at the same time strains the availability of equipment. The college has managed to provide departments with money to purchase equipment replacements and new items; additional equipment has been purchased through faculty start-up funds and a grant from the Cargill Foundation. External reviews recommended that an equipment fund be established. The college is working to remedy the situation; for instance, departments closely cooperate to schedule strategically and make the most effective use of lab space.

Schewe Library contains **174,000 volumes** in open stacks and subscribes to 600 journals. Library
users have access to numerous online databases and enjoy membership in CARLI, the Illinois Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries, giving faculty, students and staff access to over 30 million volumes in 76 academic libraries. The library is staffed by four staff with library degrees and two paraprofessionals who serve as resources to students and faculty; it also employs student workers (17 for 2014-2015; 14 in 2013-2014) for a total of over 1,900 student work hours. Schewe is open more than 93 hours a week during the semester and 45 hours a week in the summer; resources can be accessed electronically at any time. A Living Learning Library Commons, part of the library's strategic plan, has been completed. In the last several years the library has updated its technology, including a classroom space with large projection screen, computer podium, and laptops constructed in 2010; the addition of more computer stations throughout the building; updated furniture to encourage comfortable study spaces; and a Digital Learning Center (DLC) which opened fall 2014 and offers an open, collaborative learning space where students can gather and seek help from skilled staff and DLC Assistants.

Thanks to donor and National Endowment for the Humanities funding, the Archives underwent major renovation in summer 2014. The new Preserve+Share+Produce Humanities Initiative created a suite of three rooms on the Library’s first floor forming The Khalaf Al Habtoor Archives. This 1416 combined sq. ft. space includes a storage room (922 sq. ft.), reading room (625 sq. ft.), and office (258 sq. ft.), replacing the old 390 sq. ft. plexi-enclosed archive on the third floor. Guided by a consultant from the University of Illinois, the facility includes control systems for humidity, temperature, and fire suppression. This new space and a part-time archivist position facilitate the research and pedagogy begun several years ago by history faculty, including a new Introduction to the Archives course, student-faculty research, and internships. Since 2009, 30 students have worked in the archives as History Department interns; since 2011, nine students have received student-faculty research funds for archive research projects.

The Paul Findley Congressional Office Museum was established in 2012 in Whipple Hall. Staffed with a part-time curator, the museum contains records and artifacts from Congressman Findley, a 1943 graduate of Illinois College, who represented the 20th Illinois District in the United States House of Representatives from 1961 to 1983. It provides a unique resource for research and student internships, one of only a few congressional office museums.

The McGaw Fine Arts Center contains rehearsal and performance space for the fine arts in addition to faculty offices and classrooms. The Theatre program, which sponsors two-to-three faculty-directed shows as well as student one-acts every year, has office space, Sibert Theatre performance space, a small green room and costume shop, and a set shop in McGaw. In addition, some performances are held in the Icebox, a black-box-style space created in 2009 in Kirby Hall. In spring 2013 a new light board was purchased and upgrades made to the sound system in Sibert Theatre (summer 2011), and new lighting installed in spring 2015. McGaw also houses six offices, four small practice rooms, and a rehearsal space for the Music Department. Two of these offices were constructed in the past two years to accommodate a growing music faculty. Rammelkamp Chapel, which features excellent acoustics, is used for performances as well as its basement classroom space, including a digital keyboard lab. The sound system was upgraded in 2011, although this system is configured for public speakers (the space is also used for convocations) rather than musical performance. Last year the Music Department had 53 events in Rammelkamp, which is also used by the Jacksonville Symphony and the Illinois College Fine Arts Series. The Art Department (2014 external review) has a Ceramics Lab, Painting Studio, Drawing Room, Photo Lab, one faculty office, and small Gallery space in McGaw; two other faculty offices and the Sculpture Studio are in the adjacent Crispin Hall. The College improved ventilation in the Ceramics and Sculpture Studios in fall 2014.

While the institution provides the infrastructure and resources sufficient for teaching and learning in
the fine arts, this is also an area of challenge. The Music and Art programs have undergone substantive revisions in an effort to grow enrollments, increasing pressure on space. For example, the Music department has doubled the number of full-time faculty (from two to four) and also staffs two part-time faculty and eight part-time instructors for private lessons, while Art and Theatre have each gained one full-time faculty since 2009. A second large rehearsal space for music ensembles, additional storage space for all departments, upgrading sound and light instrument systems for Theatre, a fixed recording system in Rammelkamp, and replacements to outdated equipment for ceramics and photography are desired by faculty.

5. Illinois College guides students in the effective use of research and information resources. It begins in the required first-year seminar with a research paper assignment and classroom discussion of conducting research and citing sources. This is reinforced in the required Principles of Writing course (taken either in conjunction with the first-year seminar or the following semester), during which students have five sessions with a librarian on topics such as using databases, periodicals, and citation. Effective use of research is further built into the BLUEprint in the information literacy embedded experience requirement. In addition, departments such as Sociology, Psychology and History offer courses on disciplinary research methods that are required for students in the major. The Campus Writing Center and Schewe Library both are another resource, providing staff and information (online and in handout form) on correct and effective use of research. See 2.E on Institutional Review Board procedure.

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3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution’s mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students’ educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Argument

Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and enrich the educational environment by fostering student development of inquiry and character; the institution seeks to demonstrate its claims regarding enriched educational environment.

Mirroring the mission of the college, Student Affairs seeks to create an active learning community where students explore personal values, make responsible choices, and learn how to lead in order to serve. The Office of Student Activities, within the Center for Student Involvement, organizes many of the co-curricular offerings and complements academic programs through development of, exposure to, and participation in a variety of programs, activities and leadership opportunities. The Office of Student Activities enhances the Illinois College community by fostering experiences and events that promote learning and development. Student activities programs have been designed to meet broader student learning goals, which include inter-personal and intra-personal skill development, civic engagement, social responsibility, leadership, cultural competences and intellectual development. Student Affairs also supports this mission by providing a series of "Leadershops."

Recent topics include Bystander Intervention, Teambuilding, and Project Planning. Student Affairs monitors participation, retention, and graduation, and tracks GPA data for students involved in organizations ("End of Year" report).

In addition to keeping data on student participation, Student Affairs collects and analyzes feedback from new students, their families, faculty, and student leaders during IC Connections events. Student leaders complete reflection sheets before and after training retreats. Student Affairs staff also work with student committees directly in their roles as advisors to gather information on what students learn from their experiences. Student Affairs staff are working to systematize data collection and analysis beyond participation and satisfaction numbers (see, for example, the 2013-2014 assessment report). They have instituted exit interviews for outgoing student directors, surveyed returning Connections Leaders on what they learned, and surveyed Connections Leaders on the effectiveness of fall training.

Illinois College offers over 80 organizations in which students build community and practice their skills. Students participate at a high rate; for instance, the Student Affairs Assessment Summary Highlight Report 2012-2013 reports a duplicated count of 1021 students involved in campus clubs and organizations in fall 2012 and 944 in spring 2013. Many of these groups have faculty advisors and are clearly tied to the educational mission to help students develop "qualities of mind and character needed for fulfilling lives of leadership and service." For instance:

- **Student Government** and Programming: Students are elected to office in the Student Senate,
which presides over and subsidizes a majority of student organizations ([sample minutes](#)). The Student Activities Board (SAB) plans events and activities that strive to fulfill the educational, social and entertainment needs of the Illinois College community. Those involved gain experience in marketing, budgeting, contracting, event planning, team-building, and conflict resolution. Both groups seek to represent the needs of the student population while honing their leadership skills. SAB reorganized in summer 2014 to add flexibility and create internships to better highlight the on-the-job experience students gain. The new model will allow for a number of additional students to gain real leadership experience as well as to gain the skills that employers want.

**Community and Civic Engagement**: Service to our communities is at the heart of an Illinois College education (See 1.D). In a typical year, more than 90% of our students spend a total of over 11,000 hours as volunteers. A number of organizations, such as Amnesty International, Circle K, Rotaract, and Alpha Phi Omega (a national co-ed service fraternity and the largest student organization, with 114 members spring 2014), provide service to the community. For instance, in 2013-2014, literary societies and Alpha Phi Omega participated in toy drives, roadside clean-up, blood drives, mobile food pantries, and other events (76 total, involving 120 students) for a total of over 4,000 service hours. This enriches the college mission and reinforces the educational values demonstrated by the BLUEprint **Community/Civic Engagement** embedded experience and service learning courses. The Coordinator of Community Engagement and Service tracks student and organization service hours using Noblehour software. The former Faculty Director of Service-Learning has provided assessment of programs that support the role of service inside and outside the classroom. For instance, in 2013-2014 there were 193 individual service-learning experiences, in 10 classes, for a total of 1,665 hours. In spring 2014, 74% of students who participated in a service-learning course strongly agreed or agreed that "service aided in understanding course material," and 96% strongly agreed or agreed that "service aided in application of course material to everyday life" (p. 8).

**IC Connections** (the First Year Experience program, including summer orientation and Welcome Week) allows new students to share common experiences, explore values, create lasting relationships and contribute to the College’s strong sense of community. Assessment indicates that these goals are met. First-year students are required to attend convocations related to the annual theme, itself related to a stated College value; for instance, in fall 2013 the theme was "Service." **Surveys** are taken afterward to assess whether students understood the event's relation to the theme; questions have become more directed toward gathering student reflections on what they have learned. The program director assesses convocations connected to the first-year seminar course. The Connections Program uses trained student Connections Leaders who **report** participation as a valuable experience (see page 4).

**Departmental/Academic**: Organizations such as Model UN, TheatreWorks, and music ensembles provide students with educational experiences outside the classroom; although these groups are related to specific departments, any student can participate. Fourteen departments also sponsor national academic honor societies. Special interest clubs provide social space for students to explore academic interests, engage with disciplinary issues, and discover professional opportunities; many of these groups compete (e.g. ENACTUS, Pi Club), attend academic conferences (e.g. Pi Club, SAGE), and sponsor on-campus events (e.g. IC Feminists). Chemistry Club is an example of how these groups create an enriched educational environment: members participate in programs in local schools and other public venues. As part of this
engagement, students expand / reinforce their own content knowledge, are challenged to understand different perspectives on the issue of climate change, are asked to reflect on the importance of educational outreach, and ultimately create a poster to describe their experience to the Illinois College community. Similarly, members of Tomorrow's Teachers are trained as tutors and offer services in local schools, allowing them to develop pedagogical skills and reflect on their practices.

- Illinois College is rare in having Literary Societies. These societies formed in 1843 due to strong interest in intercollegiate oratory; 166 students were involved in fall 2014 (participation since 2006). The four men's and three women's literary societies hold weekly business meetings and a series of literary programs where members offer debates, orations, dramatic monologues, readings, extemporaneous speeches and individual compositions. They also engage in service and social activities. Literary Societies contribute to the academic environment and represent an important opportunity for students to build oratorical and leadership skills. Productions are evaluated by a panel of three faculty, staff, and community judges using this form and also critiqued by the society critic; feedback is shared with the society president and productionist and used to improve public speaking. This information is also analyzed by the Assistant Director, and annual awards recognize accomplishment. A survey of literary society presidents in fall 2014 reveals that students spend 2-8 hours researching, composing and practicing for a production; productionists receive feedback from the vice president and critic prior to the judged meeting, and some report making use of the Writing Center and Speech Communication Centers. Students report a perceived improvement in their research and writing skills as well as public speaking, and an awareness of the connection between coursework and literary society productions. Anecdotal evidence abounds from alumni that the Literary Societies helped students learn skills helpful to later careers, especially speaking skills, although there is currently no formal mechanism to collect this data.

- Groups that focus on diversity, such as the Coalition for Ethnic Awareness (CEA), support the educational mission by promoting racial and international understanding. CEA was the third largest student organization in spring 2014 with 43 active members. These groups support the college's commitment to diversity, as articulated in the BLUEprint US Diversity/Global Awareness goal to understand the needs and dreams of different groups. Other co-curricular opportunities, such as Study Abroad and BreakAway (1-3 week faculty-led trips), contribute to a globalized curriculum. Illinois College students have international experiences well above the average rate of 14.2% of students who earn Bachelor's degrees, with 19% of the graduating class of 2014 studying off campus at least once. These students gain global perspective and cultural competency while honing language proficiency. The Study Abroad and BreakAway Assessment report shows evidence that these experiences are successful in the learning goal of helping students gain intercultural competency (page 4-16). The "Stories from Abroad" series provides a venue for students to share their stories with the community. The college enjoys a strong connection with Japan: the Intercultural Exchange Program (IEP) with Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto, Japan is another venue for international understanding, bringing 24-27 Japanese university students to campus every year for four weeks. Illinois College students act as hosts, classroom assistants, and language partners, and have the opportunity to visit Japan on a Views of Japan BreakAway. As the IEP Assessment Report demonstrates (especially pages 4-6), the program successfully meets learning outcomes for the roughly 65 Illinois College students who participate. They learned about Japanese culture and society and gained a better understanding of their own cultural values and beliefs.

- Similarly, organizations supporting spiritual inquiry and religious life, such as Newman
Catholic Community and Brothers and Sisters in Christ, buttress the Social, Spiritual and Philosophical Issues BLUEprint category, helping students explore their values in a religious context. For instance, in fall 2014, Newman Club (17 members) organized a retreat for the local Catholic high school, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes (29 members) held a retreat at a local Christian Camp. 357 hours of student service were reported from religious life groups in 2012-2013, and 291 in 2013-2014.

The Career Services Office, which includes Internships, uses surveys of students, employers, and faculty internship supervisors to assess internship learning outcomes as measured by perceived development of skills. The Career Services Assessment Report (see especially pages 6-12) noted the greatest growth in verbal/oral communication skills and recorded student feedback such as "I learned professional skills that will assist me after graduation." Students reported completing research projects, developing new techniques for sampling enamel, and gaining facility with Excel, among other learning outcomes. Faculty supervisors were also surveyed and responded on average 4.22 (5=strongly agree, 4=agree) that the "student achieved the stated learning objective." The report also notes (page 10-11) that the office is working on how best to assess and track learning outcomes.

Athletics: A high percentage of Illinois College students participate in athletics, with 387 students (39.4%) participating in 2013-2014 (unduplicated). The college has nine teams for men and nine for women participating in the NCAA Division III Midwest Conference. Athletics enriches the educational mission of the college in several ways, including offering another venue for leadership opportunities, cultivating communication and teamwork skills, and fulfilling the liberal arts tradition of a fit body and an educated mind. The Intercollegiate Athletics' Mission Statement was recently revised and includes the following statement: "The mission of the Office of Intercollegiate Athletics is to reflect, reinforce and enhance the educational mission of Illinois College by creating an environment of excellence where student athletes develop life skills, academic skills, and athletic skills that will enable them to earn degrees, become leaders, and win championships." A new athletic director hired in the summer of 2014 is committed to assessing that this goal is met. He has developed, in conjunction with the Faculty Athletics Committee, a set of sport competition scheduling guidelines to help improve the focus on academics. Athletics staff play an important role in the Early Intervention Group, with three-to-five coaches and the Athletic Director serving on the committee to identify at-risk students. The Early Intervention group tracks and analyzes athletes' academic performance. Coaches also participate in interventions when athletes on their teams lose sight of academic priorities. Individual coaches set study table policies for their athletes. While Illinois College supports excellence on the athletic field as one venue for student success, the institution closely monitors academic performance and retention for student athletes. In addition to in-house analysis, the College participated in the national College Sports Project from 2005-2011, which provided comparison with other participating Division III schools.

The Office of Residential Life administers the Educational Benchmarking Inc. (EBI) assessment tool (page 1-5) every two years to measure student learning as well as student satisfaction. Fall 2013 results show learning outcomes in personal interactions, diverse interactions, managing time, studying, problem solving, and potential growth. The 40 student para-professional staff (Resident Assistants and Hall Directors) develop programming (pages 6-9) related to cultural, intellectual, and spiritual issues as well as "healthy choices" and social events. For example, in September 2013 Lincoln and Gardner Hall staffs partnered to bring Professor Amy Schwiderski to present about time management. The Office of Residential Life tracks programs related to the college's values of Community, Excellence, Integrity, Justice, Openness, Respect, and Service (page 7). Students who participate in a leadership position as a Residential Assistant or Hall Director have additional
opportunities for an enriched educational environment, including training in leadership and supervision, time management, and diversity (page 9-11). Learning outcomes for these students are tracked informally in the application and re-application process; additionally, Residential Life staff collects unsolicited feedback (page 12) that demonstrates learning, such as the following student Resident Assistant comment: “I felt that I grew as a person in many area of my life. I have better interpersonal and communication skills. I was able to further improve my time management and responsibility skills. I learned the importance of respect and understand it even better.”

The Office of Disability Services also contributes to the academic environment by counseling students on how to succeed with their disability, such as anxiety or a learning disability. The office reports, for example, that 77% of students experienced improvements to their GPA after starting services in 2013-2014.

Assessing the success of co-curricular activities in contributing to student education is an ongoing challenge. The institution has worked to refine its methods and changed the type of data collected in the last five years in order to more fully demonstrate claims. However, while we know anecdotally that co-curricular programs enrich the educational experience of students, many programs are still finding ways to collect, manage, and interpret that data.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

Illinois College provides a high quality liberal arts education through its residential undergraduate and M.A.Ed. degree programs. Courses and programs are current and appropriate, thanks to a program of regular review, with clearly articulated objectives. The general education program was recently revised to integrate current best practices in higher education; its use of learning communities and connected courses support our liberal arts belief in associated inquiry and the pursuit of knowledge across disciplinary divisions and classroom walls, while a framework on embedded experiences such as writing, speaking, information and statistical literacy, diversity, ethics and community engagement help students acquire and practice skills across the curriculum. Faculty and students share their scholarship and creative work with the community.

Faculty and staff are highly qualified and are supported in their professional development. The institution has responded to changing student populations by adding student support services (e.g. Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, Center for Academic Excellence/TRiO Program) and working to improve existing supports (e.g. financial aid, Language Lab, counseling). The institution continues to invest in improving infrastructure and resources for effective teaching and learning, especially in the area of technology. Co-curricular programs reinforce the mission by contributing to leadership and service opportunities as well as offering venues to learn about diversity, spirituality, and creative expression.

To sustain the quality of this education, Illinois College will continue to:

- rigorously review our educational and co-curricular offerings and seek ways to improve the educational experience for 21st-century learners;
- seek grants to supplement strategic budgeting decisions to further improve infrastructure and resources supporting effective teaching and learning;
- further refine the types of questions asked and data gathered for our co-curricular assessment to move toward a deeper analysis of how to enrich our educational environment.

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 demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
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 assure 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 assures 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 assures that the degree or certificate programs 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, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Argument

As an institution committed primarily to undergraduate education, Illinois College is dedicated to ensuring the quality of its educational programs and does so through a variety of processes.

1. All academic departments and programs are regularly reviewed. Reviews are conducted on an ongoing basis within departments/programs and supporting services (e.g. Information Technology, Library, Writing Center, Center for Academic Excellence, etc.) with formal biennial review by the Faculty Assessment Committee (see 4.B). In the last decade, the college instituted decennial external review of academic programs. Since the first regular external review of the Music department, improvements have been made to the process and a provisional schedule has been disseminated by the Academic Affairs Office. Highlights include:

- careful selection of two external reviewers via consultation with the department/program and members of Dean's Advisory Committee (DAC - a Faculty Senate subcommittee) and the Dean of the College
- a self-study prepared by the department/program, supplemented by data and information from
the Office of Academic Affairs

- a goal-directed letter of request from the Dean of the College to external reviewers
- on-site meetings of reviewers with the Dean, each member of the department/program, students served by the department/program, faculty representatives of related departments/programs, and faculty leadership from the academic Division
- evaluations from the external reviewers are reviewed by members of the department/program, the Academic Dean, DAC, and the President
- departments/programs prepare a written response indicating any future plans.

Sample documents prepared for recent reviews demonstrate the breadth and depth of information provided to reviewers as well as the extent of their evaluation. Important features include:

- deep involvement of each member of the department/program
- feedback and oversight by faculty outside of the department/program
- targeted feedback from reviewers on issues highlighted by the department/program and the Academic Dean
- mechanism for dissemination of the evaluation and requirement of reflection from the department/program
- minimal burden on departments/programs completing the external review.

As an example of change initiated by this process, the reviewers for the Environmental Biology and Ecological Studies interdisciplinary program recommended the establishment an ad hoc committee of the Faculty to re-envision the existing program. The Environmental Program Development Committee was established in spring 2013 and by spring of 2014 a revised program incorporating reviewers suggestions was approved by the Faculty.

Academic supporting services and co-curricular programs are reviewed on an as-need basis. Some recent examples include reviews of: 1) the Library in 2007, 2) the Athletics Department in 2013-2014, 3) the Religious Life program in 2010 and 2012-13, and 4) a review in Student Affairs of our Alcohol and Drug policies and programming in 2010. Such reviews provide feedback to the college on departments in transition or in need of advice. For example, the recent Athletics Department review identified eight priority action items as transition to a new Athletics Director occurred. Similarly, a 2010 review in religious life recommended enhancement of the chaplaincy, programming, and institutional support. A second consultation in 2012-2013 by the Interfaith Youth Core was initiated by the new college Chaplain to gather baseline data for an effective multifaith program. A Multifaith Program Development ad hoc committee was established with three faculty, two staff members (from student life), and two students active in religious life to begin work in this area.

2. The College is careful to ensure the quality of all credit that it transcripts. The faculty-established curricular requirements are administered by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Registrar. In 2014, the faculty voted to codify its long-standing policy and practice regarding the credit-hour definition. This faculty legislation also ensures compliance with the federal HEOA definition. As described in the college catalog, this definition extends to all credit-bearing offerings including credit awarded for faculty-student research, independent study, studio work, internships, and related experiential learning opportunities.

In 2013-2014, the Office of Career Services reported a disparity in how academic credit was assigned for work in internship programs. This resulted in a new faculty-approved policy congruent with the accepted definition for a credit hour. The Office of Career Services provides further guidance and a learning contract template to faculty and students completing internships describing the nature of student work and suggesting best practices for the intentional assessment of student learning during an
internship. These documents indicate a clear focus by the college on student learning and reflection during internships and related experiential learning experiences. In 2009, similar legislation approved by the faculty codified the nature of work and credit awarded for independent study and faculty-student research courses.

3. Transfer credit and credit for student work completed at secondary level (via AP, CLEP, IB, or dual enrollment) is transcribed by the registrar according to faculty-generated policies published in the college catalog. The registrar consults with the relevant department and requests course description and syllabus review before accepting transfer courses for Illinois College credit for the first time. Specific policies also restrict the amount of accepted transfer credit from online courses. Transfer courses may receive general departmental/program credit or credit for an Illinois College equivalent course if approved by the department in question and from an accredited institution of higher education. Individual departments set their own standards for acceptance of credit for AP, IB, etc. in consultation with the Registrar. These policies are then administered by the Office of the Registrar.

The college assures the quality and rigor of credit it awards for study abroad and off-campus experiences through policies and procedures established by the Study Abroad and BreakAway Office as overseen by the faculty Study Abroad and BreakAway Committee (SABA). This office maintains a list of approved programs and works with students to select courses of sufficient quality to transfer back as credit at Illinois College. Students may receive credit for courses in their major only after the associated department has approved such courses. Students secure this approval at the time of application and also bring back copies of course documents for review by the department to ensure that courses have met expectations for quality and rigor.

4. The curriculum at Illinois College is determined by the faculty in accord with policies established in the faculty handbook (see Academics, pg. 10; Departments and Programs, pg. 11). All potential courses originate in departments or programs which then submit proposals, in standard format, for new courses or changes to existing courses to their associated Division. All faculty members of the Division are given opportunity to review the proposal, offer feedback (rarely happens), and then vote on approval. If passed, faculty-elected Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) review the proposal. The CRC often requests additional information or revision from a department and thus the work of ensuring that a course or curricular change adheres to faculty guidelines is conducted between the CRC and individual faculty or departments. If approved, the proposal is placed on a the faculty common" network drive, accessible to all faculty, prior to recommending approval at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. Normally, the CRC's recommendations to the faculty are approved with minimal discussion. This process ensures both the quality and institutional fit of the college's course offerings and, in principle, oversight by the entire faculty. Any substantive changes to the catalog description of an existing course or the curriculum of an existing or new major or minor must be similarly approved. Courses intended to satisfy aspects of the BLUEprint must demonstrate to CRC that they satisfy additional requirements. Faculty may offer an experimental course on a one-time basis without approval by the entire faculty.

Further monitoring of course quality is conducted as part of regular departmental and program assessment (see 4.B.1 & 2). Syllabi from all courses offered each semester are collected by the Office of Academic Affairs, made available to the Campus Writing Center and to the Library, and archived. Syllabi and student course evaluation results are available to the Office of Academic Affairs as part of annual faculty performance evaluations conducted by department/program chairs and by the Dean of the College. This information is also reviewed by the faculty-elected Retention, Tenure, and Promotion Committee (RTP) (see 3.C.3).
The college exercises authority over faculty qualifications through its hiring processes as described in the Faculty Handbook, which asserts that most appointments to the faculty are made on a tenure-track basis and that only persons with terminal degrees from accredited universities are normally eligible for such appointments. A terminal degree is a requirement for tenure. Further requirements are set forth in the same section of the Faculty Handbook regarding the qualifications of non-tenure track faculty, limited term appointments, academic professionals, and part-time instructors.

The college maintains and exercises authority over access to learning resources in a distributed manner appropriate to the specific resource. Some of these responsibilities are vested in specific offices and entities such as the Office of Information Technology, the Center for Academic Excellence, the Campus Writing Center, the Speech Communication Center, the Library, and the Office of Study Abroad and BreakAways. Each of these units reports directly to the Office of Academic Affairs. Additionally, the Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) is responsible for advising the library director and chief information officer on policy, funding allocation, use, and development of campus resources. RAC also oversees appeals from faculty for funding requests for travel and course enrichment. The Center for Academic Excellence maintains records on student participation at drop-in tutoring to ensure that those resources are being utilized effectively. The college responds to other learning resource access issues on a case-by-case basis. For example, faculty noted that some students were not able to afford course textbooks. In response to this, faculty set up a textbook fund supported by individual faculty donations and other fund-raising efforts to help students in need acquire textbooks. Further action by the Office of Academic Affairs has been to direct faculty to ensure that all course texts are placed on reserve in the library. Very recently, the college announced plans to contract with another textbook provider beginning fall of 2015 and roll the cost into tuition so that all students will be provided with needed texts. Students have expressed dissatisfaction with this decision and decision-making process.

The college only irregularly offers courses for dual credit and these have been courses taught at a local private high school by college faculty using materials identical to the regular on-campus offering. Such offerings are first approved by the Office of Academic Affairs.

5. Illinois College has a long-standing tradition of preparing excellent teachers and the teacher preparation program remains our only externally accredited program. Approximately 10% of the 2014 returning student population has declared their intent to become teachers. Consistent with these educational purposes and in service to our students, Illinois College maintains teacher certification programs in the areas of Elementary Education, English Language Arts, Spanish, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Biology, History, and Visual Arts (see Catalog Description) that are accredited by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). Regular reporting to ISBE includes an annual report for each program (Math and Physical Education were randomly selected as exemplars) and a newly implemented quadrennial Unit Report. The Unit Report includes assessment data on state test results, summaries of program changes, descriptions of actions taken to address concerns for any area for which the program is on probation, and responses to any other questions asked by the state. The first Illinois College Unit Report will be filed in fall of 2016.

6) The catalog indicates that the Office of Career Services, the various departments and programs, and academic advisers "make every effort to help students prepare for graduate study and professional schools as well as direct entry into careers after graduation." Therefore Illinois College is careful to track the successes of our graduates as a measure of the quality of our educational programs.

The Office of Career Services in conjunction with the Director of Institutional Research annually conducts surveys of graduates at graduation, one-year, five-years, and ten-years out from graduation. Response rates are typically over 80% for those one-year out from graduation, so we believe the data
are both reliable and valuable. Response rates for those further from graduation are low and data is typically aggregated. This data is reviewed by the Academic Affairs Office and is shared with department chairs (both in aggregate form and broken down by major). The survey data is also dissected in terms of participation by graduates in service or leadership related activities as these outcomes are explicit in our mission. The aggregate data from the one-year out surveys consistently show that well over 90% of our graduates are either employed or attending graduate or professional programs (avg. 96%). Furthermore, one-year from graduation approximately one-quarter of our graduates are involved in some type of service (28%) or leadership role (23%). This is strong evidence that we are doing well preparing students for life beyond Illinois College and are fulfilling our mission by preparing them for meaningful lives of leadership and service. Some academic departments and programs also make use of this data in their annual assessment efforts or develop their own survey instruments to collect data from their alumni pertinent to their goals. These efforts help to ensure that academic programs prepare students appropriately for admission into graduate and professional programs, and chosen careers. Examples include:

- The teacher preparation program tracks where its graduates are hired in preparation for new state reporting requirements that monitor graduates' performance.
- The Gender and Women's Studies program conducted an Alumni survey in 2011.
- The Chemistry department maintains a summary of Chemistry/Biochemistry graduate activities.
- The Music department tracks graduate success as part of its regular assessments as shown in their 2014 assessment report.

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The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution’s processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Argument

The college is committed to educational achievement and now maintains a robust program for ongoing assessment of student learning goals at all levels of the institution. The college works to continually refine these processes for efficiency and efficacy. Oversight and accountability for student learning goals assessment is provided by individual department/program chairs and administrators at various levels of the institution and by the Faculty Assessment Committee and the College Assessment/Institutional Report Committee. Both committees include representation of the faculty and the latter includes broader participation by the President and Vice Presidents of the institution.

1. The college has clearly stated student learning goals at multiple levels across the institution. At the individual course level, all syllabi are required by the faculty handbook to inform students of course learning goals. Recently, faculty have been reminded at the beginning of Fall semester of items typically included in syllabi. Of the 8 syllabi in a random sample, seven (88%) have multiple specific learning objectives whereas the eighth has a single, broadly-stated learning outcome. At the academic department and program level, individual units are expected, as described in the Assessment Handbook, to develop an assessment plan founded on a set of goals that are directly related to student learning and student success. Many departments and programs have developed mission statements from which their respective goals are derived. Goals and mission statements, together with assessment plans, are submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs as part of a unit assessment report that is reviewed biennially by the Faculty Assessment Committee. Some units make such statements public on their department web page or in the catalog description (example: Chemistry Major). Clearly stated learning goals for the BLUEprint are presented in faculty documents on the BLUEprint program, the college web site and on some individual syllabi of courses that are associated with aspects of the BLUEprint. Goals for student learning are less clearly delineated in co-curricular areas but are embedded in some catalog descriptions of activities, services, and facilities (see for example Sports and Intramurals, Student Organizations, Career Services, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, Health Services, Religious Life, Residential Life, and Student Activities). Co-curricular goals are also evident in some of the assessment reports from individual units in Student Affairs (see for example Office of Career Services, Office of Student Health Services, Disability Services, Office of Residential Life EBI Survey, Templeton Counseling Center). At the broadest level, student learning outcomes are implicit in the mission of the college (see 1.A).
The college has implemented effective processes for assessment of student learning and these are continually scrutinized for efficiency and meaningfulness. The assessment process for individual units is specified in the Assessment Handbook as amended by the Faculty in 2011. This amendment was advanced to improve and streamline the assessment process without hampering quality. The essential components of the assessment process are:

- Each department, program, or administrative unit (DPU) prepares measurable goals. For academic units these goals focus on student learning and success. For administrative units these goals are related to student learning where appropriate, as well as effectiveness. All members of the unit should be involved in goal specification.
- Each unit develops a timetable and plan for evaluation of goals - typically a four-year cycle.
- Academic units compile two-years of data into an assessment report that is submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs and is reviewed by the Faculty Assessment Committee. Administrative units submit annual assessments to their respective VP.
- For academic units, the Faculty Assessment Committee reviews each unit's report and generates a committee response letter that is returned to each department/program chair. The committee may also request that an academic unit submit assessment reports annually if additional monitoring is deemed appropriate.
- Based on the academic reports and response letters, the Dean of the College compiles an annual summative evaluation of academic unit assessments -- highlighting overall strengths and areas for growth and development. This evaluation is distributed to the Faculty, the Cabinet, and the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. This report also becomes part of the biennial Institutional Assessment Report.
- For administrative units, Vice Presidents provide an annual summary of their assessment activities. These are disseminated to the Cabinet and appropriate committees of the Board of Trustees. They also become part of the Institutional Assessment Report.

In addition to individual academic unit assessments, the faculty have also established specific learning goals for each aspect of the recently developed general education program (BLUEprint). Assessments for this program are still in process. Assessments of the preceding general education program included the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) and the CBASE exam. The Faculty have also developed college-wide rubrics for assessment of: 1) civic and community engagement embedded experiences, 2) speaking extensive experiences, and 3) writing extensive experiences. The college also continues to utilize the CLA to measure development of students' critical thinking and related cognitive skills which pervade the general education program.

The college utilizes the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) and the corresponding Faculty survey (FSSE) to measure student perceptions of various aspects of the educational program in comparison with peer institutions and other norms (see 4.B.2 below).

These various assessment processes are effective because they focus on student learning goals, encourage broad campus involvement, attempt to minimize burden and maximize value, foster oversight and accountability, in some cases allow for comparison with peer institutions and national norms, and provide meaningful feedback (particularly to academic units from the Faculty Assessment Committee's response letters and the annual summative evaluation of academic units from the Dean of the College). Challenges include: 1) increasing clarity of learning goals and developing meaningful assessments for co-curricular programs, 2) continuing to enhance the efficiency of the process and reduce the assessment burden on individual units, and 3) continuing to develop assessments that drive improvement in student learning.

from the Faculty Assessment Committee show that effective assessment of student learning outcomes and department/program goals is occurring. Furthermore, the response letters from the Faculty Assessment Committee demonstrate a commitment on the part of the institution to foster continual improvement in assessment efforts and a desire to guide individual DPU's to develop assessment processes that drive improvement in teaching and learning. Examples of effective assessment from those reports linked above include:

- Use of pre- and post-testing of terminology and concepts in the Gender and Women's Studies program.
- Use of multiple assessment methods such as: 1) use of lab report scores, take-home exams, and national norm-referenced ACS and ETS exams in Chemistry, 2) use of NCA standards, signature assignments, graded exams, student reflections, and excerpted student course evaluations in Communications and Rhetorical Studies.
- Measurement of increases in cultural awareness and respect for cultures and differences for those students with international experiences by the Study Abroad and BreakAway Office.
- Development of a departmental rubric to assess experimental design skills in Biology.

Beyond this sample of individual academic unit assessment reports, recent summaries from the Dean of the College indicate that units are increasingly implementing effective assessment practices more broadly and consistently (See Dean of College's annual assessment summaries from: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014). The 2013 summary shows that, of reporting departments and programs, 100% are using multiple assessment methodologies, 79% are using specific measurable goals, and 71% are providing meaningful evidence about student learning. Opportunities for growth in assessment practice remain however. The 2009 summary indicated that some departments and programs are still using end-of-term course grades as assessment indicators but that the situation had improved by 2013. The 2013 summary indicates that most departments are still not effectively "closing the loop" on assessment by utilizing assessment evidence to drive improvement in student achievement. Of the reporting departments and programs in 2013, only 36% were deemed to have used assessment data to confirm successful pedagogy, 29% used assessment data to drive pedagogical change, and 21% used assessment to motivate curricular change. The 2013 summary report encourages departments and programs to understand that the goal of assessment is "that faculty can understand how effectively students are learning, continue practices that work well, and determine what new practices to try or adopt." The report urges departments and programs to follow the St. Olaf College motto that assessment should be: 1) Meaningful, 2) Manageable, and 3) Mission-Driven. To encourage development of this aspect of assessment practice, the Faculty Assessment Committee made three exemplary assessment reports from the 2012-2013 cycle available to all faculty: Communication and Rhetorical Studies, Masters' Program in Education, and Biology.

Assessments of the newly developed BLUEprint general education program are still evolving. Campus rubrics for three of the aspects of the BluePrint have been approved and are beginning to be utilized (see above). The Office of Information Technology is working with the Office of Institutional Research and faculty to develop a process for compiling these assessment results and an ad hoc faculty-staff committee is exploring ePortfolios. As discussed in 4.B.1, broad assessments using the CLA and NSSE/FSSE address aspects of general education outcomes. Recent CLA results (2011-12, 2013-14) show not only that our students receive a "value-added" education but also that Illinois College adds more value than 157 other institutions that administered the CLA. Other key results are summarized in a recent report to the Faculty from the Dean. Results from CLA administrations are summarized by the Dean, shared with faculty, senior administrators, and the Board of Trustees. **CLA results by department/program** are shared with individual department/program chairs. Results of **NSSE** are presented to department chairs, the Faculty, the Cabinet, and the Board of Trustees. The Director of Institutional Research also makes a presentation
to the Faculty on the NSSE results at a Faculty Symposium. The 2011 NSSE results show improvement for first year students in all five areas compared to 2008 and in three of five areas for seniors. The results also suggest that perception of academic challenge by seniors is an area for institutional reflection and potential growth. When compared to FSSE results, the greatest discrepancy is that faculty tend to perceive that instruction in their courses focuses on higher-order cognitive skills (application, analysis, evaluation, synthesis) whereas students perceive that courses focus on development of lower-order skills such as recall of facts and basic comprehension.

Central to the "foundations" portion of the BLUEprint is a First-Year Seminar (FYS) course that is integrated into a program called "IC Connections" which aims to prepare first-year students for success in all aspects of the institution including both curricular and co-curricular programs. IC Connections bridges both academics and student affairs and seeks to transition traditional students into the college milieu. Assessment of the FYS is conducted by the FYS program coordinators and is reviewed as described in 4.B.1. The 2012-13 IC Connections assessment report indicates the diverse and multi-faceted approach to assessment of that program and provides evidence that learning goals are being achieved (see also 3.E). Key features of that report, which mostly use student perception metrics, include:

- Consistently over half of the students report that the Success Strategy Sessions are helpful whereas only about one-fifth found them unhelpful.
- The FYS convocation program is more tightly integrated into FYS courses and increasingly students perceive those connections.
- Students perceive high level of intellectual challenge in the FYS courses.
- Between two-thirds and three-quarters of students perceive that their abilities in discussion, critical reading, and writing have improved.
- More than three quarters of students understand the nature and value of a liberal arts education and the values of the IC community.
- More than 80% of students perceive that they have received good advising.

Co-curricular programs are primarily administered under the Office of Student Affairs and all assessments of those programs are overseen by the Dean of Students and partially by the faculty's Student Life Committee. Exceptions include Athletics which reports to the Office of the President, and is also informed by the Athletics Committee. Assessments of student learning and outcomes in Student Affairs are often conducted in terms of participation and satisfaction metrics and the focus of unit goals is on best serving students rather than specific student development outcomes that are implied in the catalog narratives (e.g. skills in leadership, interpersonal relations, ethical action, etc.). The most recent annual report from Student Affairs demonstrates some effective assessment approaches as exemplified in the following.

- The college engaged in a multi-year project to educate students about lifestyle choices related to drugs of abuse and alcohol and the associated learning outcomes affect students' ethical decisions, academic performance, health and well-being, and retention. The Office of Student Affairs made use of the CORE alcohol survey to measure progress and guide educational programming and policy decisions. The survey results point to consistently improving moderation and thoughtful decision-making by students (see 3.D.1).
- The Templeton Counseling Center (TCC) has goals related to educating students on mental health issues and monitoring the success of students receiving treatment. Their report, based on satisfaction surveys, shows that more than 80% of students indicated they had improved in areas such as coping strategies, self-management skills, self-understanding, and healthier lifestyle. Over half of the students indicated an improved academic performance.
- The Office of Residence Life provides many opportunities for our students to learn about
leadership and effective interpersonal interactions. That office administers the EBI survey (see 3.E) and results indicate general perception of development in target areas (average of 5.5 on 7 point Leichardt scale) with lowest satisfaction ratings related to issues of stewardship and sustainability.

- Athletics is under new leadership as of 2014 and has recently developed a new mission statement and is developing assessment data beyond the regular coaching satisfaction surveys used in annual staff evaluations. (see also 3.E)
- The Office of Career Services measures participation in student work and internship programs. In 2011 the office began collecting performance evaluations from student work supervisors but with very low response rates. In 2014, the Office created a Google Docs survey that supervisors could submit electronically that generated 70 returned evaluations as compared with 23 in 2011 and 32 in 2012. In these surveys, supervisors rate student workers on several criteria such as "carries out assigned duties and responsibilities," "technical work skills," "interpersonal skills," and "dependability." Analysis of the 2014 assessment indicates that students excelled and were consistently above the "average" scale rating of three (see also 3.E). Students performed best in areas of work ethic (dependability, following directions) and were weakest in areas of technical skill. Students involved in internships are similarly assessed.
- Assessment of service activities are compiled by the Coordinator of Community Engagement and Service and service learning activities have been summarized in the Service Learning Assessment Report by the Faculty Coordinator of Service Learning (see 3.E). This indicates broad participation and strong impact on students that participate. In summary, assessments of the co-curricular programs show areas of strength but need more focus on student outcomes and the development of assessments for those outcomes beyond participation and satisfaction surveys.

At the broadest institutional level, assessment results are distilled into summary documents prepared by the office of each Vice President and are submitted along with other data prepared by the Office of Institutional Research to the College Assessment/Institutional Report Committee which crafts the biennial Institutional Assessment Report. This document provides a snapshot of metrics that indicate the success of the institution -- including as it pertains to student learning and outcomes. Primary results from a variety of assessments and metrics are compiled in the Illinois College Fact Book (2012-2013, 2013-2014) by the Office of Institutional Research. The "Fact Sheet" near the beginning of that document is publicly available under the "Consumer Information" section of the Illinois College web site. The Fact Book is used by the Board and Administration to inform policy, procedures, and decision-making. It reports on: characteristics of entering students, enrollment statistics, student engagement and learning, student persistence and graduation, faculty characteristics, business affairs and advancement, financial aid, and institutional rankings.

The Institutional Assessment Report and its supporting documents broadly indicate that:

- Illinois College's academic area has developed a strong culture of assessment. Although some departments/programs are not yet working with the most effective tools for closing the loop on assessment, the structure and expectation to encourage improvement are in place.
- Most academic areas have both effective assessment instruments, areas of very strong results, and the ability to use assessment for improvement.
- The area of Student Affairs is moving more slowly, but deliberately, towards a strong culture of assessment. Some of these were indicated above but the Disability Services report in particular can serve as a model of effective assessment for other areas of student affairs.
- The areas of Admissions, Business Affairs, Athletics, and Development are judged more directly by quantitative metrics: net tuition revenue, balanced budget, wins and losses, and funds raised. Those areas do a good job of explaining the bottom line, but have not yet
developed an effective culture of assessing clearly what practices lead to those results.

- The Institutional Assessment report and other assessments show that the overall condition of assessment at Illinois College is quite strong, with areas which are improving.

3. Illinois College makes use of information gained from assessment in multiple ways. Examples from our educational programs and support services are evident in the reports from the Dean of the College's annual assessment summaries discussed in 4.B.2. These summaries indicate that many units are making use of assessment data to affect improvement in student learning and outcomes. These reports also indicate that many units are using assessment data to effectively demonstrate student outcomes and learning but that they are not yet using that information to drive improvement. This continues to be a consistent message to DPU's from the Faculty Assessment Committee and the Dean of the College.

Student Affairs and co-curricular areas have also used assessment data to drive policy and make programmatic or delivery changes. For example, as indicated in 4.B.2, the Office of Student Health Services utilized the core alcohol survey, an external review, and other instruments to assess attitudes towards alcohol and drug use to design an effective educational program and supplement the efforts of peer health educators. Survey evidence shows that students have made gains in understanding risk behavior and have the tools for making better lifestyle choices. Experience in this endeavor has also informed the policy decision to eliminate alcohol at literary society functions. Following this action, the number of incidents involving the literary societies has decreased.

As discussed more completely in 4.C, assessment of retention, persistence, and completion data has prompted significant change with regard to enhancing student success based on adaptation of best practices to local circumstances.

4. The current processes and methodologies for assessment reflect good practice and involve substantial participation from faculty.

As presented in 4.B.2, assessment in academic areas follows good practice by using multiple-assessment methods and generally using targeted assessments rather than composite measures such as end-of-course grades. Programming and resources are provided to faculty and other constituents to support the development of good assessment practice. Some examples include:

- The Faculty Assessment Handbook provides links to resources and best practices that departments and programs can use to inform assessment plan development and implementation.
- In 2010, the opening faculty conference featured presentation by faculty at St. Olaf College that addressed learning outcomes and general education.
- Faculty deliberations on the BLUEprint were informed by the guidelines of the LEAP initiative.

Good practice continues to be reinforced by response letters from the Faculty Assessment Committee which encourage each DPU to make specific improvements in their assessment methodologies so as to become more meaningful and conducive to improving student outcomes.

As indicated in 4.B.1, the institutional processes for assessment of educational and other programs involve the substantial participation of faculty and instructional staff. The Faculty Handbook section on other responsibilities requires faculty to contribute to departmental assessment efforts. In practice, participation varies among departments.

Faculty contributed extensively to the development of the new BLUEprint general education program which involved wide participation by most full-time faculty in the sub-committees which determined
learning objectives and outcomes for the various aspects of the BLUEprint. These were then presented and discussed by the entire faculty at a series of regular and special faculty meetings. Subsequently, faculty have participated in oversight of this program - ensuring that approved courses have the necessary components and assessments - through the CRC. Other subcommittees of the faculty have also developed the campus-wide rubrics for evaluation of the writing, speaking, and civic responsibility components of the program which have subsequently been approved by the faculty.

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- NSSE Preliminary Notes for Faculty 8_22_11
- NSSE14 Engagement Indicators (IC)
- Opening Conference 2010 Agenda
- Opening Conference 2010 Learning Outcomes for General Education-St. Olaf
- Random Selection Procedure
- Res Life EnrichedEnvironment
- SABA AssessmentReport.2014
- Service Learning Assess 2013-2014
- Syllabi Advice
- Syllabus Random Sample
4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to 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 but 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

1. Illinois College is committed to student success and educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and graduation rates. The Realizing the Vision (RV) strategic plan sets specific accountability goals with respect to these metrics. Specifically, the plan called for:

   - first to second semester average retention rates of 93% or above in spring 2011-2015 and trending upwards
   - average first to third semester retention of 80% or above
   - average four-year graduation rates increasing annually, beginning spring 2012; reaching 60% by spring of 2017
   - average six-year graduation rates increasing annually; reaching 65% by 2017 and 80% by 2020.

These goals are ambitious because our student population is increasingly comprised of students who are first-generation, low income, or both. The RV plan affirms these goals are attainable, given the excellent education offered by the faculty and the wide range of academic support services. Recent progress towards these goals supports the claim for attainability.

2 & 4. Illinois College measures retention and completion rates according to the IPEDS definitions. Retention rates are calculated on student populations as of the tenth day of the semester and this data is collected collaboratively by of the Office of Institutional Research and the Registrar. Data on retention and completion rates are shared with the Dean of the College, the members of the Early Intervention Group (EIG), the Cabinet, the Board of Trustees, Faculty (faculty meetings, department/program chairs meetings), and all Illinois College community members at Town Hall meetings. Samples of recent retention reports (2011-2012 preliminary retention analysis, 2014 Retention Report - Executive Summary, 2013-2014 report, spring 2015 report) illustrate extensive analysis and interpretation - partitioning the data into various sub-classifications (e.g. non-recruited female athletes) to examine areas where retention is differentially high or low. The data show semester-to-semester fluctuation but overall, depending on the chosen interval, low persistence and completion rates for a given cohort are exceptions, superimposed on a gradual upwards trend.
Additionally, the Office of Academic Affairs uses student exit interviews for all students withdrawing as discussed in the 2014 Executive Summary report. Recent data suggests causes of attrition are manifold and idiosyncratic. Issues of financial difficulty and institutional fit are evinced but not the sole predictors.

3. Illinois College uses information on retention and completion to make improvement in student outcomes. In 2005-06, concern over enrollment and retention became a priority after first-to-second semester retention dropped to its second lowest level of 71.1% ever recorded at the college. In response, we formed the EIG (see also 3.B.2). A focus on student success became integral to improving retention. Since that time, numerous changes and support services have been implemented that reflect good practice. These include (see 3.D.1):

- a learning community for all first-year students, integrating two courses;
- the Yates summer bridge program for selected first-generation first-year student scholars;
- the creation of the Center for Academic Excellence;
- the TRIO program;
- committed advising and a policy of "scheduling to strengths;" and
- the formation of the EIG.

The EIG involves broad participation from many areas on campus. The group focuses on identifying at-risk students, reducing risk of failure overall, using "intrusive advising," providing enhanced academic and first-year support, and early intervention for students in academic trouble. We encourage faculty to enter grade estimates into the system well before mid-term, notify EIG of students missing classes, or with health or residential issues. From 2006 to 2013, one faculty member has received a one or two-course annual release to coordinate and participate in interventions. In 2014, this function moved to the Dean of Student Success.

This focus on student success involves tight collaboration between different areas of the campus: faculty, advisors, coaches, health professionals, residence life staff, the EIG, the Center for Academic Excellence, and the Office of Academic Affairs. Students identified as at-risk are provided aggressive support, from individualized tutoring to staff actually going to a residence hall to encourage a student to attend class. The details and history of this multifaceted response to retention and completion data are described in a series of papers presented in 2007, 2010, and 2011 at the National Symposium on Student Retention. These papers demonstrate modest (but erratic) improvement in average retention and completion rates, and also historically record high rates for individual semesters. Furthermore, data show that IC has, in part, been able to achieve the ambitious goals set for retention and completion rates by the "Realizing the Vision" strategic plan described above in 4.C.1. The dedication of resources and the commitment of so many offices and individuals at the institution demonstrates the resolve of Illinois College to monitoring retention and completion rates and seeking to make improvements by focusing on individualized student success.

**Sources**

- Dashboard Indicators for Illinois College
- EIG EarlyInterventionatIllinoisCollege
- EIG StandardizedTestScores
- EIG TheMagicPill
- FA14 Departing Student Characteristics and Survey Responses Abridged Rpt 2 12 15
- Faculty Handbook 2014
- Faculty Handbook 2014 (page number 17)
- RealizingTheVision2011
- RealizingTheVision2011 (page number 8)
- Retention Realizing the Vision February 2015
- RetentionReport_2014_PreliminaryAnalysis
- RetentionReport2013-2014
- RetentionReport2014_ExecSummary
- RV-Assessing RV 2011-13
- Withdrawing Student Surveys Fall 2013
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

Illinois College demonstrates responsibility for student learning and success across all aspects of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services in many ways. Illinois College will continue to utilize, and enhance practices in the following areas:

- regular external academic program reviews
- careful scrutiny, involving extensive participation by the faculty, of all courses proposed for inclusion in the curriculum
- faculty-wide assessment of the BLUEprint general education program
- effective tracking of graduate successes and enhanced communication about those successes
- effective evaluation of student learning outcomes through campus-wide assessment with oversight at various levels including the Faculty Assessment Committee and Institutional Assessment Committee
- written feedback on assessments to individual academic units to assure good practice and guide improvement
- dynamic monitoring of retention, persistence, and completion rates, building upon the focus on individualized student success as overseen by the Early Intervention Group and the newly created Dean of Student Success

As Illinois College looks towards the future and the actualization of a strategic map being initiated by the new President, we will need to focus our efforts on the evaluation and improvement of teaching and learning in the following areas:

- enhanced sharing of information and communication about successes of graduates
- broader development and communication of clearly-stated learning outcome goals for co-curricular programs and learning support services
- enhancement of assessment processes for co-curricular programs
- more attention to designing assessments of educational programs that are meaningful in terms of "closing the loop" -- so that information from assessment is better utilized to drive improvement in teaching and learning

Sources

- Strategy Map (diagram)
5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

The institution’s resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution’s resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution’s organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution’s staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Argument

The Illinois College resource base supports its current educational programs and plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future. Illinois College is a residential liberal arts college with all operations on the campus in Jacksonville, Illinois.

1-4 Fiscal Resources

The College has five important attributes that will provide a stable financial future:

a. The Fiscal Year 2014 Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) is very strong as liabilities are only 12.6% of Total Assets.

b. The Composite Financial Index has been consistently very strong.

c. The Long Term Investments of the College are quite large for a smaller college.

d. The Long Term Investments have been managed very conservatively and provide stable substantial returns from fixed income investments.

e. In recent years, development activities have improved the current income and additions to the endowed resources of the College.

This foundation of sound financial health will allow the college to maintain current operations and to strengthen program quality in the future.
a. Each year the College has received an "Unqualified" audit opinion from the independent CPA Firm contracted to complete the audit. Audit reports and financial statements have been included for FY2010, FY2011, FY2012, FY2013 and FY2014. The Business Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees oversees all financial operations and the Audit Committee oversees the audit process.

At the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2014, Total Assets were $226,239,523 while Total Liabilities were only $28,525,755, or 12.6% of Total Assets. Total Net Assets were $197,713,768, or 87.4% of Total Assets. From 2010 through 2014, Total Assets grew 20.7% while Total Liabilities only grew 2%. As a result Net Assets grew by 24% during this time period. Therefore, the current financial position of the College as measured by the Statement of Financial Position is very sound and has improved over the last several years. Liabilities of only 12.6% of total assets are quite low.

b. Colleges are evaluated for financial stability using financial ratios. The Primary Reserve Ratio, the Equity Ratio, and the Net Income Ratio are combined into The Composite Financial Index. The Composite Financial Index is the most relied upon indicator of college financial health by the HLC. The index is interpreted by use of the table below:

**Composite Financial Index Evaluation Table for Private Institutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zones</th>
<th>Composite Index Range</th>
<th>Financial Panel Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Above the Zone</td>
<td>1.50 to 3.0</td>
<td>No Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Zone</td>
<td>1.0 to 1.4</td>
<td>Review if flagged two or more consecutive years: request additional financial documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below the Zone</td>
<td>-1.0 to 0.9</td>
<td>Review and request additional financial documents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The resource can be found at [http://www.ncahlc.org/Table/Accreditation-Processes/Monitoring/](http://www.ncahlc.org/Table/Accreditation-Processes/Monitoring/).

Illinois College has consistently reported ratios in the category "Above the Zone," suggesting the institution is in good financial standing with no further review required. The Composite Financial Index scores for the College are in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>2.576</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>2.548</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. As of the end of Fiscal Year 2014, the Long Term Investments of the College were valued at $151,665,808 which represents a 34.6% increase since the end of FY2010. This amount is currently 67% of the Total Assets of the College, up from 60% in FY2010. Long Term Investments could serve as collateral for loans if the College were to seek additional financing for a new project. It also provides a very strong investment base to earn consistently high returns.

d. Long-Term Investments have been invested in a conservative fashion and provide a consistent fixed income for the College. In FY2008 and FY2009 when the market dropped, Illinois College saw
a large decline in investment fair value, but not in dividend and interest income. These returns have ranged from $5.5 to about $6 million from FY2010 through FY2014. This income is provided by interest and dividend revenues and farm income. In FY2014, dividends and interest were $5,430,206 and farm income was $541,750.

Illinois College is in a strong financial position even in the event of another financial downturn. If the overall stock market dropped 30%, the College would be able to pay all bills and not cut programs. This could not be sustained over, say, a 10 year period; however, the College's financial base could sustain it through a typical financial crisis. In the unlikely event that the stock market did not recover, the College could draw from the $42 million quasi endowment (unrestricted funds the College has chosen to treat as endowments) to make ends meet for several more years. Finally, the college has $48 million in additional reserves in the temporarily restricted category which could be expended in extreme circumstances with Board approval. The details regarding the approval of these actions can be found in the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act.

e. Over the last several years, there has been a concerted effort to increase the amount of annual fund gifts, major gifts (over $1,000), and the percentage of Alumni participants. Through the Realizing the Vision Plan and ongoing strategic planning, more resources have been committed to the fundraising operations of the College. The Development budget has grown from $477,785 in FY2010 to $509,198 in FY2015, an increase of 6.6%.

Future Fiscal Resources, "Investing in Ourselves," and Challenges

As part of Realizing the Vision, and continuing with the College’s current strategic planning, spending from the Endowment is at a higher level than the goals (4-6%) in the College’s spending policy. There is a concerted effort to grow the College in many ways; therefore, the College is investing in itself. For example, additional budget dollars have been allocated to revenue-producing areas such as Enrollment and Marketing, as well as Development. Resources have been allocated to programs and personnel designed to attract and retain students who will be successful at Illinois College. See 5.C.3 for discussion of the current Strategy Map planning. The Strategy Map process makes clear that budgeting priorities are closely in line with the mission of the College. All revenue is used to further student success and the College’s mission and none is diverted to unrelated projects or to other entities. In the short term, from the financial point of view, the College will spend from the Endowment and see a higher-than-desired tuition discount rate as it positions itself for the future in a highly competitive market.

The December 2014 S&P rating for Illinois College affirms its A-/Stable rating citing the College’s very strong financial resource ratios, solid endowment (approximately $148,000 per FTE student), and its very low amount of debt. However, S&P notes concerns regarding continued full accrual operating deficits, continued high tuition discount rates, and continued above average endowment draws.

In the long term, the College will need to meet its goal of steady net tuition revenue growth and work toward positive cash flow through operations. As the College works through its strategic plan there will be challenges to meet in order for the plan to be successful. Some of these challenges include:

a. Increasing net tuition and fees;

b. Increasing net assets through recognizing positive cash flow from operations;

c. Increasing net assets through increased fund-raising, and
d. Increasing the overall enrollment.

a. The entire College staff and faculty recognize the need to increase net tuition and fees. The Strategy Map aims directly at improving enrollment and retention in order to increase net tuition and fees. Tuition and Fees are the largest revenue item and were $26,178,329 in 2014 an increase of 49.4% since 2010. Tuition and Fees have increased for two reasons: 1) Tuition increases and 2) Enrollment increases. Tuition and Fee increases have averaged about 6% per year. For the 2014-2015 academic year, tuition and fees are $29,210 per year for full-time students.

Scholarships have grown by 87.1% to a total of $14,846,845 from FY2010 through FY2014. The result is Net Tuition and Fees has grown by only 18.1% to a total of $ 11,331,504. As a result of these changes, the discount rate has increased from 45.3% in 2010 to 56.7% during 2014.

Fall enrollment declined by 38 FTE students or 3.83% from Fall 2013 to Fall 2014. According to the Controller, the current estimate of FY 2015 Net Tuition and Fees is approximately $11,600,000, a shortfall of about $220,000 from the Approved Budget. The College will endeavor to control costs in response to lower than expected enrollment. A prioritized list of deferred maintenance activities has been created and positions vacated by employees have been restructured by combining duties, or held open for a longer than normal period to lower expenditures.

For example, the assistant in career services retired and the position was redefined as a professional career counselor. The time saved by automating the student work timekeeping process allowed the position to be redefined to meet other needs of the College. A position in the Library was not filled for four months, realizing significant cost savings. The President reports that she expects to meet the $220,000 shortfall in this fashion.

b. Net assets are also a target emphasized in the Strategy Map, with a focus both on improving the effectiveness of operations and on increasing philanthropy. The challenge has been that decreases in Net Assets from Operations (i.e., operating deficits) have occurred in each of the last five years. The College has realized investment returns large enough to fund operations while still increasing the overall value of the Long Term Investments and overall Net Assets.

During the past five years the College has experienced operating deficits on an accrual basis (which includes non-cash items such as depreciation).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2,374,739)</td>
<td>(1,594,956)</td>
<td>(3,844,390)</td>
<td>(3,058,831)</td>
<td>(2,987,129)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, on a cash basis, the College's bottom line has been as follows for the most recent five years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1,264,324)</td>
<td>(707,249)</td>
<td>65,157</td>
<td>(603,851)</td>
<td>708,937</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategic initiatives and capital projects have contributed to the results in years of negative operating cash flow.

c. The search for a new president of the College in 2012-2013 emphasized the importance of fund-raising as a priority. President Farley has carried out that mandate. After the surprising resignation of the VP for Development on her first day in office, President Farley took direct responsibility for the
development area. She initiated an external review of the Office, which was completed by Bentz Whaley Flessner (BWF) of Minneapolis, Minnesota. After the review was completed, President Farley reorganized the Office based on the advice of BWF and her experiences. She then led the search for a new VP. Although such major changes require time to show results, the efforts of the reorganized Office have been effective in the short run.

d. Enrollment issues challenged the College from FY2009 through FY2011 but recovered nicely through FY2014. The undergraduate headcount for fall terms for the last ten years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>FY06</th>
<th>FY07</th>
<th>FY08</th>
<th>FY09</th>
<th>FY10</th>
<th>FY11</th>
<th>FY12</th>
<th>FY13</th>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>1030</td>
<td>1023</td>
<td>1014</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>957</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A combination of policy changes, personnel changes, and the U.S. economic downturn all contributed to a lower than expected first year class in fall 2008. The first year class fell from 258 students to 166, a reduction of 35.7%. Fortunately, with improvements in recruiting and retention, the College improved enrollment through FY2014. Unfortunately, enrollment dipped again in FY2015. A slowed enrollment growth and an increasing discount rate have caused net tuition revenue to be relatively flat the past two fiscal years.

Overall, expenses have not grown in an extraordinary fashion. Operating Expenses have grown 23.4% over the last four years while Operating Revenues have grown at a rate of 29.1%. However, Net Tuition and Fee Revenues have only grown at a rate of 18.1%, requiring higher draws from endowment income. A goal of Realizing the Vision was to increase enrollment to 1,200. The improvements in fall student FTE from FY 11 through FY 14 indicate the success of RV strategies and actions, but were not sufficient to eliminate the swings in retention numbers. The new strategy map will lay out a new (similar) goal and a timeline to attain the goal. As part of the process of developing the Strategy Map, the College has identified what worked with RV and has started to implement a series of new proactive strategies to improve enrollment.

**Strategies designed to improve recruitment:**

- Investments in pipelines for music, international students, and debate with new pipelines added annually.
- New partnerships with three Community based Organizations that foster a college-ready environment for low-income students.
- Predictive modeling and market segmentation specifically to target populations of students with characteristics that make them likely candidates for admission.
- Collaboration between the Marketing and Communication staff and the Admission staff on an "Experience Ladder" that articulates the features, benefits, and rewards of the Illinois college experience.
- Restructuring of the Marketing and Communication office.
- Implementation of Render report recommendations to adjust high school counselor programs, increased on-campus signage, restructuring of the campus visit experience, and consistent value-proposition messaging rather than price discussions.
- Increased marketing research through an admitted student survey and use of National Student ClearingHouse data designed to explain why our enrolling students chose to attend IC, and why those who enrolled elsewhere made that decision.
- Assignment of a second regional representative to Chicago in 2014.
- Increased attention in regional markets outside a 100 mile radius of Jacksonville: St. Louis and the metro east, Quad Cities, and Indianapolis.
• Increased admissions counselor travel to Texas and California to support our efforts in those markets.
• Launch of an initiative for international recruitment for fall 2015, with a goal of 20 international first-year students.

Strategies designed to improve retention:

• Creation of the new position of Dean of Student Success.
• Leadership of Early Intervention Group assigned to Dean of Student Success.
• Initiation of “Clearance Process” designed to help students resolve payment problems before the 10th day of the semester.
• NetVUE grant activities designed to help students connect the liberal arts to potential careers.
• Curricular and residential policy changes aimed at improving success of transfer students.

To grow revenue, the College is looking beyond our local and domestic populations. The fastest growing demographic of high school graduates in Illinois is Hispanic students; the number of high school graduates in rural central Illinois is declining. Students are more likely to transfer from college to college. The enrollment efforts are to recruit an increasingly diverse student body located outside of the 100-mile radius around Illinois College.

In conclusion, it is important to remember the College has consistently reported a Composite Financial Index of 2.5 or above in the last several years. This value is quite strong and each year the HLC required no additional review of financial records. Many higher profile Liberal Arts Colleges' ratios are similar or worse:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Name</th>
<th>Composite Financial Index (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illinois College</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knox College</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grinnell College</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amherst College</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams College</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This data was taken from the Federal Student Aid Website (https://studentaid.ed.gov/about/data-center/school/composite-scores).

Even in the event of another economic downturn, the College is well positioned with consistent fixed-income resources and other spending options to weather the storm, without cutting programs. In the meantime, the College has embarked on an intensive process aimed at developing a Strategy Map to increase enrollments and balance its budget. In the short run, delaying of some capital improvements, delayed filling of open positions, and focusing on expenditure control will be utilized to minimize deficits.

Illinois College, like most small liberal arts colleges, must work very hard to maintain its strong financial position. However, with slightly better enrollment, Illinois College is very well positioned financially to meet future needs.

Human Resources
In order to provide the appropriate level of human resources for a growing institution, employee counts have increased in the last few years. The table provides census data from IPEDS reporting as of November 1, each year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>FT Staff</th>
<th>FT Faculty</th>
<th>Total FT</th>
<th>PT Staff</th>
<th>PT Faculty</th>
<th>Total PT</th>
<th>Total Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All staff are appropriately qualified based on the requirements of job descriptions and trained in accordance with the Human Resources qualifications and training policy. A random sample of five staff positions has been provided to show how job requirements mesh with qualifications at the time of hire. The College has added additional employees in a systematic and targeted fashion. All academic departments request new positions based on assessment data demonstrating that a new position is needed; these positions are evaluated by the Dean’s Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations to the Dean of the College and then to the President. Other departments seeking staff replacements or additions must provide justification to the Office of Human Resources. All such requests and explanations are discussed with the Cabinet and the Director of Human Resources.

Every new employee completes mandatory sexual harassment and FERPA training online through United Educators, directed by the Office of Human Resources. The trainings are completed on an annual basis by all employees. Depending on the position, online Driver Safety Training through United Educators is required immediately after hire, and again on an annual basis.

The Director of Human Resources reports that 83% of staff members have completed the sexual harassment training. The Faculty participated in training at a January, 2015 meeting. Unfortunately, the College has changed providers of online training, and Human Resources directors, so many of the training records from previous years have become unavailable.

Informal on-the-job training is conducted individually on a position-by-position basis at the departmental level, where individuals currently working in the department train the new employee on their job, ensuring the employee is given the proper resources to effectively and efficiently carry out the position responsibilities. New faculty participate in a two-day orientation, including discussion of mission, use of the electronic advising and registration system, appropriate conduct with students, resources for supporting struggling students, and the role of the Faculty Senate.

Illinois College strongly encourages professional development of staff. Funds are allocated in the budget for each department to be used for professional development. Employees are able to attend continuing education and professional development events during business hours without having to request paid time off. With approval and dependent upon the budget, employees are reimbursed for attending conferences and seminars in their field. This year, for example, eight staff attended training on our Jenzabar information system.

Each August Illinois College holds a day-long Opening Staff Conference for all staff to attend. Staff members choose which informational and training sessions to attend from the conference
schedule. Some topics have included the Art of Student Recruitment; Excel Basics; and Health Insurance 101.

Each staff member is evaluated on an annual basis around March. The results of these evaluations are used to determine salary increases for each employee. Supervisors evaluate their employees on performance, and note goals for the upcoming year in the comments section. Each employee has the opportunity to provide feedback on his/her performance and job overall. Evidence of this process is below provided by the Performance evaluation form, and reminder memos sent by the Director of Human Resources to Staff supervisors and to Vice Presidents.

The Benefits Committee is an all-College committee to review employee benefits and benefit policies. An extensive array of benefits for all employees are described in the Faculty and Staff Handbooks. The committee meets about once per month during the academic year and discusses issues such as the renewal of the College's health insurance carrier. Details are provided in the minutes of these meetings.

The Staff Appreciation Committee, headed by the Director of Human Resources, serves two functions: 1) organizing events and actions showing appreciation for individual staff (i.e., Attaway commendations) and for the entire staff (i.e., Staff Appreciation Lunches) and 2) advising the President about topics and structure for the yearly Opening Staff Conference.

Faculty qualifications and performance are evaluated through a systematic process described in detail in 3.C.2-4.

Physical and Technological Resources (also see 3.D.4)

The College's physical plant is managed by an experienced Director of Campus Facilities and a facilities management staff that includes lead electrical and special events technicians, maintenance technicians, and custodial technicians. The director of Facilities Management reports to the Vice President for Business Affairs and collaborates with the Administration and Board of Trustees in annual and long-range planning.

The College has eight Academic buildings, nine athletic facilities, seventeen other campus facilities, and eleven residence halls. Thirty-seven of the forty traditional classrooms (93%) are equipped with electronic resources such as computers, projectors, and DVD players. There are also ten science laboratories.

Course sizes are quite small at the College. As such, additional students can be accommodated without large increases in the number of courses offered. During the Fall 2014 term, the number of courses offered grouped by class size is presented in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Size</th>
<th>2-9</th>
<th>10-19</th>
<th>20-29</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Sections</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average class size was 15.4 students during Fall 2014. The above data includes regular course offerings only. Special offerings (independent studies, music lessons, independent research, and internships) with one student have been excluded.
The Illinois College Registrar reports that the College's classrooms can support the 1,200 students called for in the Strategy Map. This can only be accommodated, however, if the College schedules more classes in the early morning and evening hours. Some smaller classes would have larger enrollments.

The residence halls can accommodate a total of 902 students. The Spring current occupancy is 755 or about 84%. Housing options include single-gender housing, coed housing, traditional residence halls, suite-style residence halls, apartments, and houses. As students may live off campus after their junior year, sufficient on-campus capacity exists to accommodate enrollment growth.

Capital improvements for the campus are ongoing yearly. The budget in FY 2010 was $700,000 but has increased to $1.35 million in FY 2014. Typical capital expenditures include technology upgrades, facility additions and remodeling, furniture and repairs, and improvements to facilities, and repairs. A complete listing of capital expenditures can be found in the capital budgets for FY 2010, FY 2011, FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014.

The Cabinet and Board of Trustees are in early discussions about incorporating a long term deferred maintenance plan into our budget planning. In December 2015, the Budget Committee considered a preliminary (draft) list of needs, which was prioritized and submitted to the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee in February 2015. Annual capital budgets have been developed year to year from priority needs from a similar large list. This discussion oversees an intentional long term plan (10-15-20 years).

The Board of Trustees Building and Grounds Subcommittee oversees all campus facilities. Selected minutes from 2005, 2012, and 2014 provide evidence of this oversight.

The College's Chief Information Officer (CIO), reports to the Dean of the College and manages a staff of six. There are also a number of student workers who help staff the Help Desk where assistance can be obtained by phone call or email. Recent developments in technology on campus are detailed in a statement from the CIO.

The Information Technology (IT) budgets have increased significantly since the early 2000's. The College upgraded the phone system in FY2014 at a cost of $220,000. A switch from the AIMS Educational software to the Jenzabar system in 2009 saved considerable administrative operating costs. Since FY 2011 the total Educational, Administrative, and Capital budgets for information technology have increased from $736,014 to $800,727.

In the last three years, IT has assessed the technological resources on campus by use of The Higher Education TechQual+ Study survey. The most recent assessment results are reported in their 2013 Assessment Report.

The Director of the Schewe Library reports to the Dean of the College. The Library is approximately 31,000 square feet on three floors. The FY2015 materials budget is $258,000. Additional information on the library, the Mellon Grants, NEH Grant, the Archives, and the Digital Learning Center can be found 3.B.4.

**3-5. Goals, resource allocations, and budgeting**

Resources are allocated by the College in a systematic and rational fashion based on the Mission Statement, assessment, and the budgeting process.
Historically, administrators and trustees decided the direction of the college based on their feelings about what a liberal arts college should be. In the last fifteen years, however, there has been a major shift to involve those closest to the actual work in the goal setting, assessment, and budgeting processes.

As part of the 2005 HLC re-accreditation process, each department developed a mission statement consistent with the College mission statement. Specific goals for operations were identified based on these mission statements. These statements have evolved into formal assessment plans. Assessment data is used to determine how effective the operations are. Tremendous advances (especially in academic affairs) have been made in the assessment of these goals over the past few years. Additionally, academic programs offer courses that satisfy Blueprint requirements to ensure all graduates have met the goals of the College (see 1.A).

Assessment data are now used to identify strengths and weakness in programs and departments. Areas of weakness are addressed through restructurings, reallocation of resources, and requests for additional resources (See 4.1).

Requests for **operating funds** are budgeted from the department level up through a series of budget officers. The process begins with budget officers submitting requests which will be reviewed, adjusted, or approved by the appropriate VP. VP's submit complete budgets to the VP for Business Affairs for review, adjustment, and recommendation to the Cabinet and President. Formal approval is then required by the Board of Trustees in their May meeting. The Board of Trustees considers the budget carefully and may require changes as they see fit. The agenda and minutes for the May 2014 meeting provide evidence of this process.

Capital **Expenditure** requests are proposed by departments, discussed by the college-wide Budget Committee, and then reviewed by the Cabinet, approved by the President, and submitted to the Board of Trustees Building and Grounds Subcommittee. The full Board approves capital expenditures at their May meeting.

The **Budget Committee** reviews the College’s operating budget and capital budget, makes recommendations for those budgets, and helps to promote transparency in the budget process.

Detailed descriptions of the budget process for **revenue**, **capital**, **operating expenses**, and **salaries** are provided. The budgeting of revenue is a joint effort of the VP for Business affairs and the other appropriate vice presidents.

The **Resource Advisory Committee** (RAC) assists the Library Director in establishing library policy (such as the process for removing books) and allocating library funds: suggesting what journals to buy and determining departmental book purchasing allocations. It advises the Chief Information Office on issues that concern faculty (lab/classroom equipment) and helps to develop policies for technology use. It also allocates money for professional development.

Control over budgets and expenses is maintained in an orderly fashion. Budget Officers (usually department chairs or heads) are responsible for controlling the budget and expenditures under their authority. For example, the Chair of the Economics, Accounting, and Finance (EAF) department has access to its budget information through Connect2. All expenditures must be authorized by a multiple signature process that requires a minimum of two signatures. These terms are clearly stated on the purchase order form, one of many appropriate forms available on the Connect2 system.

The College also has an **Accounting Services Manual** with guidelines and explanations of various
policies and procedures. Budget Officers receive training when appropriate to make sure they understand the budgeting and expenditure control process.

The position of accountant oversees departmental operating budgets. The controller oversees the operating and capital budgets using the budget to actual reports. The VP for Business Affairs oversees the work of the accountant and controller but is also directly involved in further analysis and in the communication of this information to the President and the rest of her cabinet. The VP for Business Affairs also presents the financial condition of the college to the Business Affairs subcommittee of the Board of Trustees. The Audit subcommittee oversees the yearly financial statement audits. The overall Board ultimately is responsible for oversight on all resources of the College.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution’s financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution’s governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Argument

The Illinois College governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The Board of Trustees follows the by-laws of the college and serves as the ultimate authority for general, academic, and financial policy making functions and is responsible for the College's financial health and welfare. The Board is required to hold three regular meetings per year.

Board members become knowledgeable about the College through orientation, provided materials, and meetings required of them. Six (27%) members of the Board live in the Jacksonville community. An additional eight (36%) trustees live in close proximity to the College in Missouri, Illinois, or Indiana.

In an effort to collaborate closely with the Board, President Farley has instituted two conference calls in preparation for every Board meeting. One call is used to prioritize agenda items for the next meeting. VPs then prepare reports which highlight issues, results, and plans for the future. After Board members receive this information (about three weeks prior to the meeting) a second conference call is used to identify clarifications or other information required for the meeting. This process increases the efficiency of the committee meetings.

While the Board and administration collaborate in setting goals for the College, the Board has the ultimate oversight responsibility. Collaboration occurs through the meetings as a whole and in the eight standing committees: Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Business Affairs, Enrollment, Advancement and Long Range Planning, Trustees and Nominations, Audit, and Grievance. A complete list of committees and sub-committees is available.

The Chair of the Board shall preside at all Board and Executive Committee meetings and is also a voting member of all other standing and ad hoc or special committees of the Board. This change to the by-laws was approved at the October 2014 meeting. No other significant changes were made to the by-laws. The President of the College is an ex-officio non-voting member of each standing committee. The appropriate Vice President serves as an ex-officio non-voting member of each standing committee and serves as secretary for the committee.
Actions of committees follow a consistent pattern based on the agenda and documented in the minutes. Considerable discussion between members and administrators ensues. For example, at the February 2014 Board meeting, the Business Affairs committee reviewed the financial reports as of December 31, 2013. The agenda and minutes from this meeting reflect this action. All committees and sub-committees follow these same procedures. The specific powers and duties of each of the Board committees are expressed in the by-laws.

Most Board members and Cabinet members attend every Committee meeting. Occasionally, some committees meet at concurrent times so the President and other Board members cannot attend all meetings. The President and Cabinet are available for discussion and oversight by the Board throughout the entire meeting three-day period.

Frequently, committees will include Board members with special expertise and interest in relevant areas. For example, the Chair of the Audit Committee is a forensic accountant and is credentialed as a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE). The Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, has a Ph.D. in English and has been a professor and department chair at another institution of higher learning. The Chair of the Business Affairs Committee is general counsel for Golden Gate Capital, a large private equity firm.

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees is designed to assist the Chair and the President in guiding the operations of the College between regular meetings, if necessary. The committee has not met during President Farley's tenure.

The President serves at the pleasure of the Board, is the College's Chief Executive Officer, and is responsible for all academic and managerial affairs of the College. The President delegates authority to the Vice Presidents who are members of the Cabinet. Each VP is accountable for a distinct area of the College. The College by-laws describe this organization in detail. Additional information on the governing board is available in 2.C.

2-3. The President and cabinet typically meet on a weekly basis. A selection of five meeting agendas (from Nov. 2013 - Sept. 2014) and minutes have been provided as evidence (one, two, three, four, five). VPs hold frequent staff meetings to share information, check progress, and collaborate with their staff. Staff members are asked to report on accomplishments of their sub-unit during these meetings. As these employees work closely together on a daily basis, formal agendas and minutes are generally not used.

Faculty share in the governance of the College in several ways. Department/program chairs meet on a monthly basis year with the Dean of Faculty. Chair meetings serve as an opportunity for the Dean of Faculty to provide information on pertinent issues. However, this sharing of information is not one way. Feedback is generally solicited from the chairs and vigorous discussions are common. Meeting minutes for September 2013, February 2014, and October 2014 (selected systematically) are representative of these meetings.

All Faculty participate in monthly faculty meetings properly documented by minutes. Randomly selected minutes from November 2013, August 2014, and October 2014 are representative. Faculty are responsible for the curriculum and serve on several academic and college-wide committees. Special faculty meetings are scheduled to address issues of importance beyond the scope of regular faculty meetings. For example, in September, 2014, a special faculty meeting was held so faculty could collaborate in the creation of the campus-wide Strategy Map to plan future actions by the College.
Each Department or Interdisciplinary Program is a member of one of three Divisions. Divisions allow discussion of relevant issues beyond a particular Department or Program and also elect several representatives to serve on important College committees. Division business was once handled through monthly meetings but is now mostly conducted electronically. There is sentiment among some faculty that the Division structure is antiquated and may need revision. Attendance is generally low at meetings. Divisions meet if directed to do so by the Dean or when elections need to be held. The Associate Dean of Faculty has asked the Faculty Senate to consider this issue.

Departments and Programs meet regularly to address issues relating to their activities. Formal meetings vary in frequency based on the size of department and nature of issues. Most Departments and Programs meet monthly but many meet more frequently. Sample minutes have been provided for the departments of Education, Mathematics, and Communication & Rhetorical Studies. Informal meetings occur frequently as many faculty work in close proximity to others in their Department. Programs tend to be multidisciplinary so informal meetings are less frequent, however, these programs normally meet once per month at a minimum.

Faculty schedule appointments with the Dean of the College to discuss issues they feel require one-on-one communication. The Dean reported that in the first four weeks of the 2013-2014 academic year, as a sample, she met with 20 full-time faculty individually, some more than once; this number does not include meetings with faculty committees. These meetings covered topics such as sabbaticals, teaching issues, hiring, governance issues, and issues facing chairs. It is common throughout the year for employees to participate in meetings directly with their supervisor. Evidence exists in a recent one week calendar for the Provost, VP of Business Affairs, and the Dean of Faculty.

Faculty meetings follow Robert's Rules. Other meetings may follow Robert's Rules of Order but may also work more informally. Faculty committees operate under the direction of the chair and must set an agenda and maintain minutes. Some committees work toward a consensus rather than following majority rule.

Staff share in the governance of the College though interactions with their supervisor, staff meetings, and their appropriate Vice President. The general tone at the College is one of open communication. Administrators are accessible to their staff and communicate with them on a daily basis. Many employees work closely with their supervisors and their Vice President. Staff interact with students on a daily basis and may serve as supervisors or mentors to students. Staff also serve on the following committees: Curriculum Review, Teacher Preparation, Admissions, Educational Policies, Resource Advisory, Student Life, Study Abroad/BreakAways, Benefits, Budget, College Assessment/Institutional Report, and Early Intervention Group. On some committees (Benefits and Budget for example) staff take active roles. On other committees (Educational Policies for example) the staff representative has a more advisory role.

In a 2013 Staff Development Survey, results and comments suggest that employees feel valued by the College in most respects. Most employees reported being satisfied with retirement contributions, health care benefits, tuition remission, and opportunities for professional development.

The only significant complaints were wage or salary related. About 45% of the respondents said they were dissatisfied (38%) or very dissatisfied (7%) with wages. 80% of the respondents listed increase salaries/wages so their number one priority out of eight choices related to compensation. Comments also reflected the desire for higher wages/salaries.

The Employee Appreciation Committee was formed in January 2011 to bolster the spirits of all employees. The committee plans a variety of events and offers "Attaways" awards which recognize
employees for a job well done. Recent events include holding an event on October 31, 2014 with a caramel apple bar and pumpkin carving/decorating contest. The committee has also recently assumed the "Employee of the Month" recognition responsibilities from the Student Senate.

Students share in the governance of the college in a number of ways. The Student Senate attempts to reflect student opinion on basic and important issues of College life and works to promote the best interests of the students within the larger context of the Illinois College community. Minutes from the September 2014 Student Senate (randomly selected) are representative of these meetings.

Students also serve on College committees and work in many College departments. In these roles, students interact with members of the administration, staff, and faculty on a daily basis. Students play an even larger role within the Student Affairs area of the College. Students are responsible for planning entertainment through the Student Activities Board and do much of the work for Homecoming.

While students share in the governance of the College, the process has room for improvement. At times students have failed to attend committee meetings or to inform the Student Senate on committee business. A recent controversy emerged related to textbook policy. Improved commitment and communication from student representatives will prevent issues like this in the future.

Collaborative processes are a part of daily life at Illinois College. The President and other administrators welcome new ideas and the sharing of information. Campus wide events are held where students, staff, faculty and administrators have opportunities to learn more about college activities and participate in shaping those activities. The President has held a series of "town meetings" open to the entire College community. Meetings held thus far include in November 2013, on the State of the College. In February 2014, Joanne Soliday (from CREDO) presented on "Surviving vs. Thriving Institutions" a prelude to the Strategy Map. In May and September 2014, Strategy Map updates were held.

Faculty have a monthly opportunity to interact with the administration through faculty meetings. Officers prepare reports prior to each Faculty meeting and are in attendance to field questions from the floor. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators serve on a variety of College committees and collaborate to craft policies. Usually, policies drafted in committees require approval other bodies, such as the faculty, the Cabinet, and the Board.

The development of policy may originate from a concerned faculty/staff/student or an administrator. Issues raised by faculty normally require collaboration and approval at the Department/Program, Divisional, appropriate Committee, and then Faculty meeting levels. A good example related to some faculty members’ concern about students enrolling in their courses on the 10th day of the term. Many of these students struggle after missing two entire weeks of a course. Often, these faculty thought, students added of doing poorly in a different course. The Educational Policies Committee therefore recommended and Faculty approved a new policy, allowing a student to add a course without permission up until the fifth day of a semester and only with the professor’s permission between the fifth and tenth days.

Staff concerns are normally raised with their immediate supervisor or during staff meetings. The staff handbook contains an official Employee Problem-Solving Procedure. For example, the Embrace Innovation theme team (Strategy Map Process) identified flexible work hours as an opportunity to help staff engage in their best work. The theme team has gone on to work with HR and two departments to introduce flexible hours on a pilot basis for staff in those areas.
Student concerns may be raised with any appropriate body within the college. Typically students talk to faculty and other staff they are close to when an issue arises. Faculty or staff may be able to resolve the issue, or refer the issue to the appropriate supervisor, committee, or other college official. Students may make formal complaints to the VP for Student Affairs or VP for Academic Affairs depending on the nature of the issue. Student complaint files are maintained by both VPs to document the complaint and its resolution.

Some student concerns are raised through the Student Senate. The Student Senate has two advisers, the Dean of Students and one faculty member. Non-academic issues would be handled by the Dean of Students but may require discussions at the Cabinet level as well.

Administrators will propose changes to operating procedures or to formal college policies. Changes to operating policies are frequently first discussed during Department and Program Chairs meetings. If necessary, the Dean may ask a Faculty Committee to take up a particular issue. Major issues will be discussed in open forums, Faculty meetings, Division meetings, Committees, and Department/Staff Meetings, if appropriate. Ultimately, decisions will be made collaboratively.

Finally, specific to Academic Affairs is the Dean's Advisory Committee (DAC). This Committee is used by the Dean to discuss various policy issues. Four representatives of the Faculty sit on this committee and collaborate with the Dean of the College on a variety of issues. Sample agendas, a sample sabbatical proposal, and a sabbatical report have been provided as evidence of some of the DAC's activities.

Employees and students are encouraged to take the initiative to develop new skills and to take advantage of leadership opportunities. The position of Associate Dean allowed faculty members to learn about administration and bring a recent faculty viewpoint to the Dean’s Office. Associate Deans had significant responsibilities and they brought their experience back to their departments.

Staff in many areas attend conferences to improve their leadership abilities to take on the challenges of the new position. All VPs and the President attend meetings appropriate for the challenges and responsibilities of their positions. Faculty take advantage of professional development funds to attend professional meetings and on-campus programs to develop their skills. Librarians attend regional meetings and as part of the Mellon grants; librarians and IT staff have attended Educause meetings. Department/program chairs have attended CIC meetings for chairs. The Provost was supported in becoming certified as a Peer Reviewer for the HLC. The College also takes every opportunity to promote from within when qualified talent is available, as was the case with the recent CIO hire.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
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. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution’s sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Argument

Illinois College engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. Resources are allocated by the College in a systematic and rational fashion which is intertwined with Mission Statement goals, assessment, and the budgeting process. See 1.A and 5.A.

2. Assessment data are gathered to evaluate the effectiveness of operations. The assessment process has improved significantly (especially in academic affairs) in the last several years.

Assessment data are used to identify strengths and weakness in programs and departments. Areas of weakness are addressed through restructurings, reallocation of resources, and requests for additional resources. Additional faculty or resources (science equipment for example) require justification in the budgeting and resource allocation process. Requests for positions follow posted guidelines and must include a justification for the position supported by rationale and data. The Dean of the College in conjunction with the Dean's Advisory Committee reviews all requests for new or replacement faculty.

For additional information on assessment see 4.B and 5.D; for additional information resource allocation and budgeting see 5.B and 5.A.5.

3. The College pursues excellence through a process of strategic and operational planning. The president and the cabinet discuss "strategy" at most of their cabinet meetings. Notes from September and November cabinet meetings are representative. Strategic plans are produced with the collaboration of students, faculty, staff, the administration, and the Board of Trustees. In 2004 the "Leading the Way" Strategic plan was developed through a Strategic Planning Committee including staff, faculty, students, and community members, before being approved by the board of trustees.

An excellent example of "closing the loop" by linking assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting lies in the "Realizing The Vision" 2011 strategic plan and subsequent evaluation. Part of the planning process included the development of a budget in January of 2011 closely aligned with the goals of the plan. These efforts provided significantly more detail than previous strategic plans.
In September of 2013, the Cabinet produced "Assessing Realizing the Vision After Three Years." Additional financial details were evaluated through the document "What Illinois College Really Spent for Realizing the Vision." These new documents indicate achievements and shortfalls and explain unusual circumstances.

The goals and achievements of Realizing the Vision have been incorporated into the most recent strategic planning efforts. In November 2013 a Campus wide Town Hall Meeting was held. The College community was updated on the progress that has been made under "Realizing the Vision" and discussed future activities which include Strategy Map Brainstorming sessions for faculty, staff, and students.

The President met with all faculty and staff in 2013-2014 to hear their views on future directions and brought those ideas to an appointed Strategic Steering Committee in spring 2014 to lead the process of developing a Strategy Map. The Dean of Student Affairs led sessions with students. The 2013-14 Presidential Tour solicited input from alumni across the country about the future direction of the College.

At a May, 2014 Town Hall meeting, the President asked for community input on the ideas of the Committee. In summer and fall 2014, "theme teams" (involving 43 staff and faculty) developed ideas to help the College achieve its strategic goals. Staff and faculty provided more input at the Opening Conferences in fall 2014 for each group and both groups have been offered additional opportunities for electronic comment. Ultimately, the Board will approve any strategic steps to come from this highly collaborative process.

4-5. Planning requires a sound understanding of the College's current capacity and issues relating to enrollment, the economy, state support, new technology, demographic shifts, and globalization. Evidence of these actions lies in the plans themselves.

The Enrollment Growth section of the Strategy Map says "Illinois College will grow to an optimal level of enrollment, completing the Realizing the Vision goals. The College commits to using new student matriculation and retention strategies that represent 'next practice' in higher education. A campus-wide responsibility for enrollment success requires clear articulation of values and outcomes by all departments and programs, and high levels of collaboration across the institution."

Enrollment and retention numbers have played a role in most discussions of planning, from the President's September 17, 2014 Town Hall meeting, to Cabinet meetings considering proposed budgets, to Budget Committee meetings, and letters to Department/Program Chairs about approval of faculty positions.

The College also anticipates emerging factors such as technology, demographics shifts and globalization. Additional information on the College's technology infrastructure and Study Abroad and BreakAway efforts is in the linked documents. Illinois College has just been awarded a $100,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in support of the Digital Tools for the Liberal Arts, an initiative primarily focused on opportunities for faculty to develop greater expertise with technology in teaching.

The Digital Learning Center (DLC) in Schewe Library will play a lead role by offering an open, informal, collaborative learning space where faculty can work with students to inspire exploration, discovery and information exchange. Grant funding will support a professional development program involving faculty and students led by professional librarians and information technology specialists during the 2014-15 and 2015-16 academic years.
Additional examples include:

Demography:

- Admission representatives have been added in the Chicago and St. Louis markets and efforts have been increased to recruit students further afield.
- Enrollment management is launching an initiative for international recruitment for fall 2015.
- Efforts to improve retention include more reliance on non-cognitive indicators of success in the admission process.
- Test Score Optional admission policy was adopted to allow academically motivated students the opportunity to enroll at the College.

Financial/Enrollment/Economy:

- Illinois MAP grant reductions (grants to Illinois residents attending a private college) led to a packaging matrix to minimize the impact on revenues.
- Enrollment shortfalls led to the delaying and/or restructuring new positions to be more efficient.
- The restructuring the campus visit process.

Globalization:

- An increased emphasis on Study Abroad/BreakAway programs.
- The Ritsumeikan Exchange Program.
- International recruitment initiative.
- Japanese Studies major/minor.
- International Studies major/minor.

Technology

- IT staff and budget increases.
- Wireless campus.
- Jenzabar total campus management software.
- Annual increases in bandwidth.
- Digital Learning Center.
- Melon Grants.

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5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Argument

Illinois College works systematically to improve its performance through assessment, performance evaluations, individual reflection, department meetings, division meetings, committee meetings, staff meetings, faculty meetings, training conferences, and all-college strategy sessions.

Our institutional goals have been articulated in Realizing the Vision, the set of initiatives adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2011. The College’s achievements in relation to Realizing the Vision were articulated in a report to the Board in October 2013 and in a retention summary.

The Strategy Map requires planning to Build Sustainable Foundations. The College commits to the principle that Realizing the Vision and our mission is dependent on financial strength. Sustainable financial foundations allow Illinois College and its students to thrive. The Focus on Efficiency sub-component requires the College to identify continuous improvements that increase efficiency and effectiveness, achieve strategic goals, and put students first. The Embrace Innovation sub-component requires the College to embrace a culture of planning and innovation. That culture will drive us forward in meeting the needs of both today’s and tomorrow’s students. We will prepare for change in higher education with courage, trust each other’s ideas and innovations, and integrate our efforts at turning change to our students’ advantage.

The bi-annual Institutional Assessment Report (IAR) describes the assessment activities and results at Illinois College during each two year period. This is an attempt to look overall at the results of assessment across the College, as well as to provide an “assessment of assessment.” We ask not only how assessment has benefited students and staff learning, but also how effective our assessment processes are. Vice Presidents’ assessment reports are included in their entirety, followed by campus-wide assessment results related to overall institutional effectiveness. The conclusion discusses the overall state of assessment at Illinois College. The two most recent IARs are included (FY2011-12 and FY2013-14).

To strengthen the IAR and to improve the climate of College-Wide assessment, the College Assessment/Institutional Report Committee was formed in FY 2012. This committee crafts the IAR and provides leadership to the campus community on appropriate assessment. The President serves as chair of this new committee. Previously, assessment efforts were led by a faculty member.

While the IAR summarized efforts for the two-year period, assessment takes place continuously on an informal basis. In the classroom, if an assignment goes poorly, the instructor will adjust planned activities as necessary so students can meet the particular learning objective. A supervisor will review a proposed expenditure for propriety prior to the expenditure being authorized. The position of accountant constantly reviews departmental budgets for any unusual transactions.
An extensive discussion of faculty evaluation is available in 3.C.3; additional information on staff evaluation is available in 5.A.

Finally, since the arrival of President Farley, reviews and reorganizations have led to several major changes in personnel and operations:

- A new director for and reorganization of the Department of Public Safety
- Restructuring the Academic Affairs to create the offices of Provost, Dean of Faculty, and Dean of Student Success.
- New Director of Athletics and Bruner Fitness and Recreation Center.
- New VP for Development and Alumni Relations and reorganization of department.
- Modification of Campus Visit Process.

Sources

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- Institutional Assessment Report 2012-14 Final
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- RV-Assessing RV 2011-13
- SABA AssessmentReport.2014
- Strategy Map (diagram)
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- Strategy Map Report 2015.01.26 Final
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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

The College's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

- The overall financial condition of the College is excellent.
- The College provides appropriate human, physical, and technological resources to fulfill its mission.
- Excellent resource allocation and budgeting procedures and expense controls are in place.

The College's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative process that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

- The Board is knowledgeable and provides proper oversight of operations.
- Students, staff, faculty, administration, and the Board collaborate effectively.

The College engages in systematic and integrated planning.

- Planning is accomplished through Strategic and Operational planning.
- Strategic Planning is ongoing (Realizing the Vision and Strategy Map).
- Major improvements in assessment practices have been realized.
- Emerging factors are properly planned for.

The College works systematically to improve its performance via assessment, strategic planning, external reviews, and use of consultants.

Sources

There are no sources.