

Assurance Argument

Lansing Community College

Review date: 9/23/2024

DRAFT

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

Argument

4.A.1: LCC's program review process contains a standard set of questions that all programs must respond to and additional questions that Perkins V eligible occupational programs must address. The outcome of the review process results in annual improvement plans to improve program and student success. Starting this Fall, two years prior to each program's review, academic credentials (certificate or degree) will be subject to a credential review process to assess the particular credentials and whether the program needs to make any significant changes prior to program review. This provides an opportunity for programs to improve low-enrollment or outdated credentials prior to the formal review of the entire academic program.

Program review is organized within a [SharePoint site](#) which includes the [Program Review Guidebook](#), Program Review [Video](#), and a [How-To Guide](#) for using SharePoint in the Desktop App. There is also a [schedule](#), organized by career communities (see 3.D.2), for which programs are assigned to upcoming academic years in our 4-year program review cycle. LCC recently switched to organizing program review by career community, which resulted in some programs

having to undergo review in consecutive years. Those programs are allowed to follow an abbreviated process; there is a [modified guidebook](#). It is important to note that the [State of Michigan has approved](#) incorporating the Perkins V Program Review for Occupational Education (PROE) questions in our regular program review process, which state-approved occupational programs must complete. This allows LCC to review all academic programs on an equal footing, while additionally meeting the requirements of our Perkins V grant.

In addition to reviewing all programs in a career community at the same time, we have made changes to the structure of our program questionnaire for academic year 2023-2024. The current program review process requires all academic programs to address eleven prompts:

1. Program Overview
2. Progress in Achieving Program Improvement Plan
3. SWOT Analysis
4. Enrollment and Success Metrics
5. Learning Outcomes
6. Student Retention and Persistence
7. Completion and Graduation Data
8. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)
9. Labor Market & Transferability
10. Disciplinary Currency and Relevance
11. Program Financial Health

For state-approved occupational programs receiving Perkins V funds:

12. Program CPIs
13. Survey Results

Finally, the academic program completes an Executive Summary and an Annual Improvement Plan, and submits their report to the [Program Review Support Team](#). This team includes individuals from [Academic Affairs](#), [Center for Data Science](#), [Financial Services](#), [Committee for Assessing Student Learning](#), and the [Center for Teaching Excellence](#). Overall, the process begins in the Fall semester, a draft report is due in Spring, and the final report is due that next Fall. The close-out meeting with each academic program includes the program's faculty and administrators, the Program Review Support Team, the President of the Academic Senate, representatives from the Committee for Assessing Student Learning and the Curriculum Committee, and the Provost. For every question, an academic program must achieve a score of at least 3 (meets identified criteria) according to the rubric published in the Program Review Guidebook. Programs whose final reviews fail to achieve the score of 3 on all items are assigned a monitoring report with specific expectations. This ensures each program satisfactorily addresses all program review requirements.

Following are examples from each academic division, based on reviews completed in 2023:

- Arts and Sciences: [Psychology](#) and [Improvement Plan](#)
- Health and Human Services: [Dental Hygiene](#) (with PROE) and [Improvement Plan](#)
- Technical Careers: [Heavy Equipment Repair Technology](#) (with PROE) and [Improvement Plan](#)

Outside of the program review cycle, each academic program completes an [annual operating plan](#) which includes progress on their action/improvement plans and any budget requests that may be necessary to implement those plans. To facilitate this work, faculty align their annual Professional Activities Plan (see 3.C.2) with the Program Operating Plan. As can be seen in the improvement plans included above, a variety of issues are addressed. Psychology, as a popular general education program, is focusing on early risk assessment and equitable teaching practices. Dental hygiene is focusing on replacing essential equipment, but also addressing diversity in their applications, enrollment, and faculty. The Heavy Equipment Repair Technology is also addressing equipment needs, as well as addressing curricular and assessment development, recruiting efforts to enhance their enrollment, and retention efforts to move students toward completion. Thus, LCC's program review process helps each academic program identify and work to improve concerns most relevant to the particular program.

Each year, the Program Review Support Team meets to evaluate the process, and to recommend any necessary improvements. In addition, the Provost, Accreditation Liaison Officer, Perkins V Coordinator, and personnel from Academic Affairs and the Center for Data Science review and consider improvements to program review overall.

LCC is currently developing a non-academic program review process (pilot [review](#) and [action plan](#) for eLearning). Given that [eLearning](#) is essential to academic programs, they have been focused on continuous quality improvement in support of student success. eLearning is responsible for administration of the D2L learning management system, a suite of over 20 integrated technology tools, and a broad spectrum of D2L support services tailored for students, instructors, and staff. eLearning provides D2L support and customer service, operating D2L resource sites to provide 24/7 access to D2L guides and videos, and providing course instructional design guidance to support growth in teaching and learning at the College. This includes an ongoing review of student and instructor feedback from department and committee meetings, targeted electronic surveys and forms, and pilot groups, as well as by phone, email, live chat, and service requests, all of which contribute to [eLearning improvements](#).

4.A.2/4.A.3: In accordance with Board policy [Credit for Previously Acquired Knowledge and Learning Experience](#), the Registrar's Office ensures that all transfer credit, prior learning credit, and credit by examination is dutifully evaluated and must meet LCC's criteria before being recorded on a student's transcript, as outlined in associated standard operating procedures (SOPs). As stated in this policy, credit is transferred from another institution only via an official transcript submitted directly to LCC from the institution. Further, experiential learning credit, including prior learning assessment, must directly relate to a specific course or courses offered by LCC.

The [Evaluation and Acceptance of Transfer Credits](#) SOP requires students to be admitted to LCC and have submitted their official transcripts to the Registrar's Office. LCC requires a grade of at least 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in each course to be accepted, and the transcript must be from an accredited institution. Submitted transcripts are reviewed by a Transcript and Academic Record Coordinator (TARC). The [Transfer of General Credits](#) SOP covers circumstances under which general credits may be awarded. This not an automatic process; circumstances are limited and must be approved following a request from an academic advisor, program advisor, or Academic Affairs. Regarding [Credits Earned at Foreign Education Institutions](#), the SOP requires the student to obtain an evaluation from one of the services listed on the [National Association of Credential Evaluation Services](#) (NACES) website. LCC's TARC works with faculty in appropriate academic departments as necessary to ensure credit is awarded only for courses equivalent to those taught at LCC.

The [Credit for Experiential Learning](#) SOP outlines the process for students seeking credit for acquired knowledge and learning experience, and includes a link for the [Experiential Learning Packet](#). The information submitted is reviewed by the Experiential Learning Coordinator, who directs it to the appropriate divisional experiential learning contact. Faculty participate in approving or denying the request for credit. Similarly, [Credit for Licensure and Certifications](#) may be awarded following approval by program faculty – over [20 such credentials](#) are currently listed on LCC's website, with the [application form](#) on the Registrar Forms page. [Credits Earned in the Armed Services](#) are also eligible following review by the TARC and, if necessary, the appropriate academic program.

The [Credits Earned from Nationally Normed Exams](#) SOP outlines for the process for reviewing scores submitted by students who have taken Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examinations Program (CLEP), DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST), or International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB) tests in subjects that align with LCC courses. Based on predetermined equivalency scores, approved by Academic Affairs, the TARC reviews exam scores submitted by a student, and adds approved credit to the student's record. To ensure that the scores listed on LCC's website are accurate, the Academic Affairs Project Manager conducts a biennial review in accordance with the [Review of Nationally Normed Exams](#) SOP. This SOP requires a review of [American Council on Education](#) recommendations, and consultation with academic program faculty as necessary. LCC also allows students to take comprehensive exams for credit in select courses, as outlined in the [Credit by Examination](#) SOP. In these situations, LCC faculty prepare a comprehensive exam, which a student takes in lieu of attending class for a semester. The student must apply to do this, and must pay for the exam in advance. Passing grades of at least 2.0 are recorded on the transcript as transfer credit for the semester in which the exam was taken. Grades lower than 2.0 are recorded in the advising notes of the student's educational record.

Information for students is readily available on the LCC website and in the catalog. The Transfer and Guest webpage's [Transfer Credit tab](#) provides quick information and links to the [Admissions Team](#) and the [Transfer Equivalencies](#) webpage. The latter webpage includes a thorough [guide for evaluating courses for transfer into LCC](#), as well as more specific information on incoming transfer credit from 61 colleges and universities in Michigan. There are also links for additional information on [Advanced Placement Exams](#) (AP), [College Level Examination Program](#) (CLEP),

[DANTES](#), [International Baccalaureate Program](#), and credit for [Licensure, Certification, and Credential](#). In addition, references to the same information can be found in the [College Catalog](#).

4.A.4: LCC maintains and exercises authority over its courses, faculty, and learning resources, including all modalities and dual credit programs (whether career and technical education, High School Advantage, or traditional dual enrollment; see 1.B.3 and 3.A.3). LCC's [Provost](#) serves as the Chief Academic Officer, and is advised by the faculty-led [Academic Senate](#). Two of the senate's standing committees are the [Curriculum Committee](#) and the [Committee for Assessing Student Learning](#).

As described in 3.A.1 and 3.A.3, course development and changes are overseen by the Curriculum Committee. The [New Course Proposal Worksheet](#) requires faculty to input placement levels, prerequisites, and/or corequisites as appropriate, and the [Revised Course Proposal Worksheet](#) requires input for any proposed changes to placement levels, prerequisites, and/or corequisites. The primary responsibility for establishing placement levels and prerequisites, as well as determining appropriate corequisites, lies with the faculty in the appropriate academic program. The Curriculum Committee ensures that at least one [Academic Advisor is a member](#) of the committee to assist with discussions dealing with the transferability of courses. If necessary, the Curriculum Committee works with academic programs to consider the appropriateness of these determinations, while attempting to balance student access with likely student success.

As described in 3.A.3, all sections taught by LCC are required to use a standardized syllabus, in the [Concourse syllabus system](#). This allows the College to control essential aspects of each section syllabus, including the course description, learning outcomes, and important collegewide information. A recent addition was mandatory language regarding how the [faculty will engage their students](#). This addition was initiated to enhance the quality of distance education sections. Faculty are able to input their personal information, instructional materials, assessments and assessment weighting, and the schedule. Note: some academic programs specify instructional materials, ranges (if any) for assessments, and the overall schedule. This is particularly true for programs with 3rd-party accreditation, or programs which have specified Open Educational Resources or other specified instructional materials.

As described in 3.C.3, LCC maintains strict standards for faculty qualifications, utilizing both a [faculty qualifications matrix](#) (overseen by Academic Affairs, developed in collaboration with academic program faculty) and a [Faculty Qualifications SOP](#). All faculty, including those teaching dual credit sections, must meet the same qualifications, and they are employed by the College while teaching LCC courses. Individual academic divisions have formal processes for ensuring that faculty teaching in programs which require licensure or certification (e.g., nursing faculty) maintain the currency of their credentials, or they are not assigned sections.

As described in 3.D, LCC offers a full range of in-house student support services, which includes key learning resources such as the [library](#), [Learning Commons](#) (tutoring), Center for Student Access (disability services), Counseling, and [eLearning](#) support for the D2L learning management system. LCC staff supporting learning resources are qualified and professional (see

3.C.7). In addition to primary facilities on the main campus, in-person services are provided on a scheduled basis at additional locations.

4.A.5: LCC maintains 3rd-party accreditation or certification for 18 programs in the Health and Human Services Division and the Technical Careers Division. [Program accreditation](#) is pursued based on a number of factors, including the necessity of accreditation for students to seek employment in the particular field. In addition, program faculty assess how well the accreditation will support student success in the workforce, how well it will support students intending to transfer to a 4-year college or university, the demands of business and industry, the needs of the community, input from program advisory committees, and national trends. Program accreditation helps to maintain the rigor, currency, and relevance of key occupational programs.

The College routinely monitors the success of accredited programs. For those programs with mandatory exams for employment or licensure, the [pass rates are available](#) on our website. All of LCC's accredited programs have [academic advisory committees](#) and they all participate in our [Perkins V Grant](#), both of which help to ensure program excellence. As of this writing, all of LCC's accredited programs are in good standing.

4.A.6: LCC has a significant number of both transfer and occupational programs. For students aspiring to transfer to a 4-year college or university, post-graduation survey data shows that [24% of students have successfully transferred](#), whereas IPEDS data show that [17-61% have transferred, based on cohort type](#). Additional IPEDS data, including [trends over time and disaggregated](#) by sex and race/ethnicity, show similar results. Further, [after transferring](#) to another institution, 65% of men and 68% of women have graduated from the transfer institution within 6 years of originally enrolling in LCC.

For occupational programs with required regional or national exams that must be passed for employment, [LCC's overall exam pass rate is 87%](#). For students in health occupational fields who responded to a post-graduation survey, [82% of students were working in their degree field](#) after graduation. Across all credential types, post-graduation survey data shows that 81% of graduates were employed, with [62% of the graduates employed in a field related](#) to their field of study.

The College also ensures that our credentials are appropriate for further study or employment by working with our external partners. LCC maintains a significant number of [transfer articulations](#) with 4-year colleges and universities throughout Michigan and elsewhere, and is working to establish formal agreements with several [Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#). This confirms that these transfer institutions recognize the quality of academic preparation that students receive at LCC. Regarding occupational programs, over three dozen programs have an [academic advisory committee](#). These committees include external partners with expertise in business and industry, and they help to keep our programs aligned with the latest trends necessary for successful employment in various field of study.

LCC recently gained access to Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency wage data, in anticipation of new guidelines regarding gainful employment. The College has begun an analysis of overall outcomes – whether they [transfer or enter the labor market](#).

Sources

- Academic Advisory Committees
- Academic Affairs
- Academic Senate webpage
- Accredited Program Pass Rates
- Admissions Team
- American Council on Education
- AP Exams
- Board Packet October 2023
- Board Packet October 2023 (page number 311)
- Board Packet October 2023 (page number 312)
- Board Packet October 2023 (page number 313)
- Board Packet October 2023 (page number 314)
- CASL Charter webpage
- CC Membership
- Center for Data Science
- CLEP
- Committee for Assessing Student Learning
- Concourse SOCL 120 Syllabus Template Spring 2024
- Concourse SOCL 120 Syllabus Template Spring 2024 (page number 4)
- Credit for Licensure and Certification Application
- Credit for Previously Acquired Knowledge and Learning Experience
- CTE Website
- Curriculum Committee
- DANTES
- Dental Hygiene Annual Improvement Plan
- Dental Hygiene PROE Report
- eLearning Instructor Student Feedback Improvements
- eLearning website
- Evaluating Courses for Incoming Transfer
- Experiential Learning Packet
- Faculty Contract 2021-2024
- Faculty Contract 2021-2024 (page number 21)
- Faculty Qualifications SOP
- Faculty Quals Matrix Examples
- Financial Services Division
- Graduation Rates of Transfer Students
- HBCUs
- HERT Annual Improvement Plan
- HERT PROE Report
- IB Program
- IPEDS Transfer Cohorts
- LCC Catalog 2023-2024
- LCC Catalog 2023-2024 (page number 108)
- Learning Commons Detailed Webpage

- Library Website
- Licensure Certification Credential
- NACES
- New Course Proposal Worksheet
- New Course Proposal Worksheet (page number 4)
- Office of the Provost
- Perkins V Grant
- Pilot eLearning Action Plan Non Academic Review
- Pilot Non Academic Program Review eLearning
- Program Accreditation
- Program Review Guidebook
- Program Review Guidebook (page number 7)
- Program Review Modified Guidebook
- Program Review Schedule by Career Community
- Program Review Sharepoint Home
- Program Review Video
- Psychology Program Review Annual Improvement Plan
- Psychology Program Review Report 2023
- Revised Course Proposal Worksheet
- Revised Course Proposal Worksheet (page number 3)
- SharePoint How To Guide for Desktop App
- SOP Credit by Examination
- SOP Credit for Experiential Learning
- SOP Credit for Licensure and Certifications
- SOP Credits Earned Armed Services
- SOP Credits Earned at Foreign Educational Institutions
- SOP Credits Earned from Nationally Normed Exams
- SOP Evaluation and Acceptance of Transfer Credits
- SOP Review of Nationally Normed Exams
- SOP Transfer of General Credits
- State Approval re PROE in Program Review
- Transfer and Guest Tab 4 Transfer Credit
- Transfer Equivalencies
- Transfer Guides and Articulation Agreements
- Transfer Rates
- Where LCC Students Go

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Argument

4.B.1: LCC has effective processes for assessing student learning and achievement of learning outcomes for individual courses, academic programs, and collegewide [Essential Learning Outcomes](#) (ELOs; see 3.B.1/3.B.2). In conjunction with our guided pathways focus, academic programs ensured alignment between their course learning outcomes, program learning outcomes, and the ELOs. This alignment was the basis for an assessment plan that allows LCC to ensure the ELOs are being met. All cocurricular programs are also required to align with at least one of the ELOs.

Academic Programs:

LCC's assessment activities are guided by the [Director of Assessment](#) and the [Committee for Assessing Student Learning](#) (CASL). Assessment begins at the course level, ensuring course learning outcomes align with program learning outcomes and with the collegewide ELOs. The ELOs guide both general education and cocurricular educational outcomes (see 3.B). CASL provided an [LCC Assessment Plan](#) to support academic programs until 2021, and since then the Director of Assessment has maintained an [Assessment Scorecard and Projects](#) sheet to track collegewide assessment activities.

In select programs, the Director of Assessment guides [Assessment Coordinators](#). One of the key roles of an Assessment Coordinator is to help program faculty appreciate the purpose and value of student learning assessment. This involves updating student learning outcomes and methods of assessment, as well as aligning course and program learning outcomes with the ELOs. The Assessment Coordinator serves as a liaison between the academic program and the Director of Assessment, to ensure effective assessment data collection as the program works to improve overall student learning, as measured by authentic assessments. In academic year 2022-23, Assessment Coordinators were working within [20 academic programs](#) across all three academic divisions.

As described in 3.A.1, the [Curriculum Committee](#) (CC) reviews all new and revised course proposals, including the course learning outcomes and assessment methods. Prior to the CC

review, the Director of Assessment works with faculty to craft quality learning outcomes and coordinates with the CC in the review of proposed learning outcome changes. The goals when reviewing learning outcomes and assessment methods are to ensure the quality of the learning outcome statements, their alignment with the course description and program learning outcomes, that the learning outcomes are measurable, and finally, that the assessment methods are varied (for equity) and authentic, as appropriate to the individual course. When [accrediting agencies](#) specify learning outcomes, the CC typically defers to their expertise.

Both within program review (see 4.B.2) and as requested, the Director of Assessment works with academic programs to evaluate measures of student success based on assessment. This work guides programs in determining where deficiencies may lie, indicating a need for re-evaluation of both pedagogy and assessment methodology. This work is as varied as the nature of academic programs at a comprehensive community college, and can be seen in examples from [Child Development and Early Education](#), [Composition I](#) (ENGL 121), [Computer Information Technologies](#), and [Healthy Lifestyles](#).

In addition to general support for improving the connections between pedagogy, assessment, and student success, particular attention is paid to course learning outcomes which align with the ELOs for confirmation of general education achievement. CASL developed a [General Education Assessment Plan](#) and corresponding [assessment scenario](#) to help faculty understand their role in the process. This scenario guides the identification of the ELO-related course assessment which the Director of Assessment needs for data analysis each Summer. To further facilitate the ability of the Director of Assessment to obtain data from multi-section courses, in February 2023 the Academic Senate passed a resolution directing academic programs to work with either Assessment Coordinators or the Director to ensure [common naming of grade items](#) in D2L gradebooks as those items apply to course learning outcomes.

The Director of Assessment [compiles the assessment data](#) and prepares the annual [LCC Assessment Outcomes](#) report for the Provost Cabinet and Academic Senate, and assists with preparing the Board of Trustees Annual Ends Report E-102 – [Student Learning and Success](#) (see 4.B.3). The Summer 2023 [Annual Student Learning Outcomes presentation](#) provided general information on our students' success in achieving the ELOs and demonstrated how the Director of Assessment works with programs to do deep dives into their assessment data for the purpose of addressing areas of concern, such as [disaggregating student performance on individual learning outcomes](#) in specific courses. LCC set a target of 70% success on each ELO; i.e., 70% of our students should achieve success on assessment measures for each ELO. As can be seen in the data, this goal has been [achieved](#). However, as the data were disaggregated, deficiencies were revealed. For example, [Black and Asian students](#) did not meet criteria for ELO1, [Mathematics](#) is the primary area of concern in ELO1 (which includes math and science), and within Mathematics there are concerns in [multiple categories](#).

As an example of performing a deeper dive, the Director of Assessment worked with Mathematics faculty to examine Math – Applications for Living (MATH 119), our quantitative reasoning course for general education. In this course, Black students as a group [do not achieve](#) the criteria for success. Closer examination reveals that poor performance on assessment of the first learning outcome [correlates closely with the final course grade](#), and that these students are

[successful on the second of three](#) learning outcomes, indicating the ability to perform well. This suggests that early challenges are a key target for interventions to support these students, such as referring them to an [Academic Success Coach](#) who can direct them to both academic (e.g., tutoring) and non-academic (e.g., counseling for test anxiety) student support services. The data further provide a target for program faculty to focus on with regard to potential differences in how the successful vs. non-successful learning outcomes are approached pedagogically and how they are then assessed. Consequently, faculty may be able to make reasoned changes in support of student success, as opposed to making educated guesses or dismissing problems as being non-academic and beyond the control of the faculty.

Additional items included in the report to Provost Cabinet include a review of how grades are [currently reported](#) in the D2L gradebook, and a proposal for an [alternative way](#) that would facilitate data collection for monitoring assessment. There were also discussions of the importance of [course mapping](#), i.e., the connections between course learning outcomes, program learning outcomes, and the ELOs, and the currently active [Assessment Coordinators](#). Thus, the Provost Cabinet, which includes the Academic Deans, are apprised of ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of assessment and its utilization to monitor student success.

Recently, eLearning developed and enhanced D2L assessment guides and videos, launched the [D2L Course Design training](#) with a lesson dedicated to the development of [assessment evidence and learning experiences](#), and began work on the implementation of the new [D2L Learning Outcomes tool](#) and D2L Data Dashboards. The D2L Course Design Training was developed to assist with reducing equity gaps in online learning. The training supports faculty by combining personal content expertise with key elements of course design and delivery to meet students' diverse learning needs. The D2L Learning Outcomes tool provides a method to track and evaluate student achievement of the course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) aligned with D2L assessments, whereas the D2L Data Dashboards and reports provide faculty with critical data to track student achievement of learning outcomes, as well as to self-evaluate course content and pedagogy to ensure the needs of students are met.

Both the D2L Course Design Training and the D2L Learning Outcomes and Data Dashboards projects have included representation from numerous campus stakeholders, including faculty and administrators. Both peer and administrative reviewers are required to complete a portion of the D2L Course Design Training before conducting faculty reviews. All new faculty are required to complete the full training within their first semester teaching at LCC.

Cocurricular Programs:

In May 2020, LCC began its [Quality Initiative](#) (QI) project on cocurricular assessment, with the [QI Report](#) receiving a favorable review in November 2023. Although the project was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the College was able to accomplish its primary goals. With a focus on assessing student learning in cocurricular programs, we developed a [Cocurricular Student Learning Assessment Handbook](#) and a [Cocurricular Assessment Design and Planning](#) guide, each containing our [Cocurricular Assessment Plan Template](#). Data [were then collected](#) for the Library Instruction Program, Leadership Academy, and Cardio Exercise and Student Success program. Limited data suggests that the [Office of Diversity and Inclusion cocurricular programs](#)

[improve student success](#), but more intentional work needs to be done. [Key points learned](#) during the QI project were the need for planning and consistency in aligning student learning and/or success measures with the ELOs, and then selecting assessment tools appropriate for the type of cocurricular program.

Ongoing projects involving the Director of Assessment include developing promotional materials to [encourage faculty to participate](#) in the Cardio Exercise and Student Success program, working with ODI to better identify their students in [ACCESS](#) and [Men About Progress](#), and working with elearning and ODI to determine best practices for [recording cocurricular data](#) in the D2L learning management system.

Moving forward, CASL is working with the Director of Assessment to ensure that all cocurricular programs are assessing student learning. In [November](#) and [December](#) 2023, CASL discussed this work in earnest. The Director of Assessment developed a [Cocurricular Data Collection Plan](#), which guides each cocurricular program through determining the alignment of their assessment item(s) with the College's ELOs. This plan will indicate specific learning activities, assessment methods, data collection processes, how assessment will be reported, and where the program is currently in the process. In addition to currently active plans, data collection plans are being implemented for athletics, Men About Progress, ACCESS, and LUCERO. CASL continues to evaluate programs across the College to determine whether they are cocurricular. To assist new programs, there is an [Assessment Plan Design Worksheet](#), which is intended to help programs think about their services, who uses them, and evidence that measures successful outcomes (examples from the [Leadership Academy](#) and [library](#)). CASL intends to work with the leadership of candidate programs to receive their input on how the cocurricular definition applies to their programs, and CASL continues to review the effectiveness of these processes and documents.

The Annual Student Learning Outcomes report to Provost Cabinet (cited above) also includes a brief report on [cocurricular assessment](#), which shows that our cocurricular programs are having an overall positive effect on student success.

4.B.2: Academic programs at LCC rely on several methods associated with assessment results to improve student learning, including program review, professional development via the Pedagogy of Equity course, and the use of Assessment Coordinators to prioritize and advance intentional assessment plans in courses and programs.

During Program Review, the Center for Data Science (CDS) provides academic programs with assessment data pertaining to their program-level learning outcomes, specifically addressing [Question 5 – Learning Outcomes](#). Programs are then prompted to address several key questions in accordance with the results of their program assessment data, and the program is assessed and scored with regard to how well they are supporting student success through past and/or future plans to improve learning outcomes, assessment methodology, and pedagogy in the courses which comprise the academic program. [Question 2 – Progress in Achieving Program Improvement Plan](#) specifically addresses improvements to assessment when they were the focus of action plans during the program review cycle.

Critical to this review is the program's [Curriculum Map](#), which identifies the alignment of course learning outcomes with program outcomes, since it is the accumulation of multiple courses which is necessary to achieve fulfillment of the program learning outcomes. Program Review Question 5 then prompts the academic program to review and interpret their data, with an eye toward how they might improve pedagogy in the program to improve student success rates. These data are disaggregated, so that academic programs see areas in which equity strategies might prove most helpful. The overall response to the question is evaluated based on a [rubric](#) which is included. As an example, the recent [Psychology Program Review](#) (Note: the questions recently changed; it was Question 6 at the time) demonstrates the alignment of course outcomes to program outcomes to ELOs, monitored items are scored by [course](#), and scores are disaggregated by [modality](#), [gender](#) and [race/ethnicity](#). In this example, the program noted that equity gaps seem to be [larger in upper-level courses](#). Consequently, more investigation is needed to determine whether different types of assessment in upper-level courses might be a significant factor. This particular program is now participating in the [Assessment Coordinator](#) program, with an eye toward wholistic improvement in connecting learning outcomes, pedagogy, and student success.

As a standard item within program review, every academic program is required to address student success based on learning outcomes and assessment. Accordingly, deficiencies in student success will always be candidates for the academic program's action plans (example action plans based on assessment from [Communication](#) and [Legal Studies](#)). In addition, reports to the Provost Cabinet and Board of Trustees, to be described below, help to inform needs for institutional and budgetary support for collegewide student success efforts.

For academic programs which have identified equity gaps, the [Pedagogy of Equity](#) (POE) course can provide invaluable guidance in making changes in assessment methods that are intentional, inclusive, and equitable. The POE course addresses inclusive language, Universal Design for Learning, cultural responsiveness, curriculum globalization, pedagogy of care, inclusive engagement, critical community, and equitable principles for assessment. Whether or not an academic program has had faculty members complete the Pedagogy of Equity course, a program can identify an Assessment Coordinator to facilitate their assessment practices for the benefit of students.

4.B.3: As noted above, the College's processes for assessing student learning involve faculty, the Director of Assessment, CC, CASL, and eLearning to ensure the utilization of good practice and continuous quality improvement. Further, reports are regularly provided to the Academic Senate, Provost Cabinet, and Board of Trustees, to help support the collegewide commitment to a culture of assessment at LCC.

Faculty within their academic programs have the fundamental responsibility for assessment at the course level. The College ensures that faculty have the expertise necessary to fulfill their responsibilities in this regard (i.e., faculty qualifications; see 3.C.3), and course learning outcomes and assessment methods are reviewed by the CC and the Director of Assessment. The Director of Assessment works with both the CC and CASL, as well as with individual faculty and academic programs, and is supported by Assessment Coordinators. For example, each academic year the Health and Human Services (HHS) Division holds an [annual assessment](#)

[meeting](#) with the Director of Assessment, which provides HHS programs with an opportunity to learn from one another and share best practices and new ideas.

LCC ensures ongoing training and collaboration to keep all faculty abreast of best practices in assessment. For example, in early 2021, the Provost supported several individuals participating in a series of courses offered by the Online Learning Consortium in collaboration with HLC on distance education. One of those courses, attended by the ALO (who serves on CASL) and the Director of the [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) (CTE), covered “[Creating Effective Assessments](#).” The CTE also organizes the College’s Professional Activity (PA) Days, which often include a session(s) on assessment. In January 2024, the [PA Days sessions](#) included “*Institutional Student Data Dashboard – Now Complete!*” and “*Beyond Multiple Choice: An Introduction to Performance-Based and Authentic Assessment in Higher Education*” (offered during each session). The acknowledgement that the data dashboard is now complete was a reference to the May 2022 PA day on which [2 1/2 hours were dedicated to CDS](#). The focus of this session was to promote data literacy amongst faculty and staff, and to highlight plans to make important student success data more readily available to faculty and academic programs. In February 2024, CASL discussed plans for [possible presentations](#) during academic year 2024-2025. One likely topic would be an introduction of the new assessment support webpage being developed by a CASL subcommittee.

The Director of Assessment is a member of the [Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education](#), and has [presented](#) at one of their conferences, as well as having presented at the Michigan Association for Institutional Research on assessment. Both the Director and the ALO are inaugural members of the [Student Learning Assessment in Michigan](#) (SLAM) Consortium, a group of institutional effectiveness and assessment personnel from eight area community colleges and four university partners. The goal of this consortium is to “expand collaborative partnerships, share successes and challenges, and ultimately glean knowledge and information from this experience to improve the learning of all students in Michigan’s higher education system...” The Director has presented with one of our faculty members multiple times at the [Trends Conference](#), and the Administrative Assistant in the Center for Data Science, who supports CASL, has attended the [Blue Explorance](#) conference and multiple webinars.

One of the Board of Trustee’s five Annual Ends Reports is [E-102 – Student Learning and Success](#) which, among other information, provides the Board with an overview of student success in terms of the ELOs. The College set the [goal of a 70% success rate](#), i.e., at least 70% of the assessment artifacts collected needed to have received a grade of 70% or higher. As presented to the Board, the different ELOs are measured by drawing assessment artifacts from academic areas most closely [aligned with each ELO](#).

However, as discussed above, when the data are disaggregated concerns are noted regarding key demographics, such as the performance of [Black and Asian students on ELO 1](#) and [Black and American Indian/Alaskan Native students on ELO 4](#). In addition to this data being invaluable to academic programs, the Board uses these data to inform their decision-making processes while considering budgetary requests that aim to support student success. For example, the Board has invested substantially in establishing the [Academic Success Coach](#) program and in supporting the [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#), where a number of our cocurricular programs are housed.

These investments reflect the commitment of the College in student success, as well as the Board using assessment data to inform its decisions.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Argument

4.C.1: LCC has defined goals for persistence, retention, and completion or transfer that are based on performance indicator data collected over a period of several years using the new student cohort defined by IPEDS. In 2022, the Provost Cabinet created goals for credit momentum, gateway course completion, and retention based on the American Association of Community College early momentum metrics. The Retention Committee revised these goals and metrics using the IPEDS cohort during the 2023-2024 academic year, which will align with the upcoming strategic plan (see 5.C):

- Increase persistence from a baseline of 73% in 2022 to 78% in 2028*
- Increase retention from a baseline of 60% in 2021 to 68% in 2028*
- Increase the 3-year completion or transfer rate from 36% for Fall 2020 to 40% for the Fall 2025 cohort

*Achieving these percentages will place LCC in the 75th percentile in the [National Community College Benchmark Project](#) database.

Setting goals for persistence (Fall to Spring) and completion is particularly challenging. LCC's persistence rates have steadily remained [between 70-75%](#), whereas completion rates have remained steadily [between 32-35%](#). By focusing on credit momentum, a leading indicator, the College's goal for persistence is to remain at the high end of the range (75%). The same goal holds true for completion rates.

Completion goals for state-approved occupational programs, i.e., those that receive Perkins V funding, are set by the State of Michigan. Perkins V Core Performance Indicator (CPI) 2P1 refers to the percentage of students in occupational programs who receive a recognized postsecondary credential while in their program or within one year of completion. LCC students [exceeded the State Expected Level](#) over the past three years in several areas. In addition, 12 programs [exceeded the State Expected Level for CPI 1P1](#), which tracks continued education, advanced training, and military or other relevant service.

4.C.2: As noted above, the College collects and analyzes data on persistence, retention, and completion, and incorporates into that analysis additional measures of credit momentum and gateway course completion. The [comprehensive report from the Retention Committee](#) presents just such a detailed analysis, provided by personnel in LCC's [Center for Data Science](#) (CDS). Our approach to persistence, retention, and completion data has been informed by participation in the [AACC Pathways Project](#), and data are organized around [AACC new student cohorts](#) and [early momentum metrics](#).

LCC begins with five measures of a student's credit momentum: completing either 6 or 12 or more college-level credits in the first term, or completing 15, 24, or 30+ college-level credits in the first year. Each of these measures predicted a significantly higher likelihood of [students graduating and/or transferring](#) to a 4-year college or university within three years. Further, students completing college-level English and/or Mathematics were significantly more likely to [graduate and/or transfer](#) within three years, with the completion of a math course having the most noticeable effect. Finally, the same pattern was seen for students who persist and who are retained, with retention (Fall to Fall; i.e., returning for a second year) being the more significant indicator.

A key component of the Retention Committee's analysis is considering the relationship between leading indicators vs. lagging indicators. Generally, credit momentum and gateway course completion feed into persistence, and continued success leads into the lagging indicators of retention and completion. In simpler terms, successful students keep taking classes until they complete their educational goals (see LCC's [Mission](#)). Retention can then inform our efforts regarding the leading indicators. For example, given that completing a college-level math course in the first year had the most significant impact on completion, encouraging students to attempt a college-level math course during their first year and then proactively providing the support they need to be successful is likely to offer significant rewards. Another interesting phenomenon is that students who attempt, but fail, a college-level English course in their first year are [negatively impacted](#) (much more so than for math), indicating that providing support for students attempting their first college-level English course is critical.

In summary:

- Early momentum metrics predict a student's likelihood of persisting from their first Fall semester to the next Spring semester, being retained to the following Fall semester, and graduating or transferring within three years.
- Students who get off to a good start by achieving these early momentum metrics are two to three times more likely to persist, retain, and/or graduate or transfer within three years.

- Monitoring trends of early momentum metrics for new Fall student cohorts can identify actionable areas for interventions to increase persistence, retention, and completion.

The data and summary information above are the basis for strategy development in the Strategic Enrollment Plan. This plan has focused on getting students off to a good start, and then keeping students progressing through their program. Utilizing the College's new [Institutional Student Data Dashboard](#), faculty in individual academic programs can review their [persistence, retention](#), and [completion](#) data, including having the data disaggregated in various ways.

4.C.3: Program Review requires all academic programs to address [Question 6 – Student Retention and Persistence](#) and [Question 7 – Completion and Graduation Data](#). In addition, occupational programs are required to address [Question 12 – Program CPIs](#) (see 4.C.1), which covers continuing education (coursework, advanced training, or relevant service) and/or completion of a credential.

For Question 6, each academic program is provided with the necessary data from CDS and directed to:

- Identify any disparate impacts related to gender, race/ethnicity, or age
- Describe and analyze any patterns or anomalies with respect to persistence and retention
- Consider actions that should be taken for continuous quality improvement
- Identify goals that will be incorporated into the annual improvement plan

For Question 7, programs are directed to address the data in the same manner as in Question 6. Question 12 is addressed as required for Perkins V and State of Michigan reporting, as presented in the [Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment](#). Example annual improvements can be seen regarding [Human Services addressing persistence and retention](#), in which the program intends to focus on early alerts and student support services, and [Legal Studies addressing transfer and completion](#), in which the program intends to add/update/renew articulation agreements to encourage students to complete the program.

As noted in 4.C.2, a significant area of concern regards students who attempt a college-level English course during their first year, but are not successful. To support students, as described in 3.D.2, we have corequisite, developmental English and Mathematics courses, as well as free non-credit labs and workshops to help students succeed in their college-level math and composition courses.

In the Annual Ends Report [E-102 – Student Learning and Success](#), the Board receives a comprehensive report on credit momentum, gateway course completion, persistence, retention, and completion. Among the key takeaways in this report are:

- The data for each category are generally consistent across a 5-year period
- Despite some successes, equity gaps persist

When data regarding student success are presented to the Board, there is always lively discussion. The Board clearly indicates its concern regarding any students who are not

successful, and seeks to understand ways in which they can offer assistance through budgetary directives to the President. As noted in a [March 2024 article in The Lookout](#), LCC's student newspaper, the Board passed a budget resolution in 2016 to create the [Academic Success Coach](#) program, in order "to give every student persistent, proactive, individualized mentoring and support throughout their time at the college."

4.C.4: LCC's Center for Data Science relies primarily on [IPEDS data](#) and definitions when collecting and analyzing data pertaining to persistence, retention, and completion, and CDS also submits required information to IPEDS on an annual basis – example [graduation rates report](#). As noted in 4.B.3 and 5.A.2, College personnel have access to information via the [Institutional Student Data Dashboard](#).

LCC also participates in other data collection and dissemination projects. The College participated in the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Pathways 1.0 Colleges [Early Momentum Metrics project](#), which ended with the 2020 cohort (Fall 2020-Summer 2021), and we were asked to continue sharing data for the next two years. LCC participated in the [Voluntary Framework of Accountability](#), but discontinued participation due to the inability to obtain the data we desired for comparing LCC to other institutions. Recently, the College joined the [National Community College Benchmarking Project](#) (NCCBP) to obtain data which would allow us to once again compare our institution to community colleges in Michigan and the nation. Use of the NCCBP data is preliminary, and has not yet been fully incorporated into our analytical processes. The AACC Pathways data provided useful comparisons to top performing institutions, as well as AACC group averages. This project was recently extended, and LCC continues to participate.

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4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Summary

LCC conducts comprehensive academic program reviews on a cyclical basis, including alignment with the College mission and strategic plan, SWOT analysis, review of learning outcomes and assessment results, DEI, and analyses of data pertaining to persistence, retention, and completion. Occupational programs include the reporting necessary for Perkins V. Each report includes action plans to ensure continuous quality improvement.

The College has a policy and SOPs guiding acceptance of credit from other academic institutions, experiential learning, and other appropriate sources. The Curriculum Committee oversees the quality of courses, prerequisites and corequisites, and expectations for student learning and assessment. LCC ensures all faculty are qualified. Faculty teaching dual enrollment sections, and all academic aspects of those sections, are subject to the same requirements as any faculty/sections at the College.

Student support services and learning resources are available online and by phone, in addition to on campus, ensuring all students have access. LCC maintains accreditation for a number of academic programs. The College evaluates the success of its graduates in multiple ways, including academic advisory committees with members from local business and industry.

Assessment of student learning is supported by the Director of Assessment, CASL, and Assessment Coordinators. CASL developed an assessment plan and, with the Director, coordinates with the Curriculum Committee to ensure courses have quality learning outcomes and assessment methods. The Director works with faculty to compile assessment data, including general education outcomes and the disaggregation of assessment data. eLearning supports assessment processes and the collection of data within the D2L learning management system. Assessment data are presented to the Academic Senate, Provost Cabinet, and Board of Trustees. Reviewing these data and taking steps to improve student success are a key component of program review for academic programs.

The College recently received a favorable report regarding its Quality Initiative, which focused on cocurricular assessment. CASL continues to work on identifying cocurricular programs, as well as assessing student success within these programs.

LCC collects data on credit momentum and gateway course completion, and analyzes the effects of those measures on persistence, retention, and completion. The Retention Committee sets specific, collegewide goals. Academic programs seek to attain those goals through action plans resulting from data shared by CDS during program review or obtained by the programs

themselves via the Institutional Student Data Dashboard. The Board also reviews student success data, and supports budgetary allocations encouraging student success. LCC utilizes IPEDS data, as well as data from a variety of other sources.

Sources

There are no sources.

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