

Assurance Argument

Grand Rapids Community College

Review date: 3/25/2024

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Argument

College Mission Statement

Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) is an open access college that prepares individuals to attain their goals and contribute to the community.

College Vision Statement

GRCC provides relevant educational opportunities that are responsive to the needs of the community and inspires students to meet economic, social, and environmental challenges to become active participants in shaping the world of the future.

College Values

Excellence – We commit to the highest standards in our learning and working environments.

Diversity – We create an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful environment that recognizes the value, diversity, and dignity of each person.

Responsiveness – We anticipate and address the needs of students, colleagues, and community.

Innovation – We seek creative solutions through collaboration, experimentation, and adaptation.

Accountability – We set benchmarks and outcomes to frame our decision-making, measure our performance, and evaluate our results.

Sustainability – We use resources in responsible ways to achieve equity across our social, economic, and environmental practices and policies.

Respect – We treat others with courtesy, consideration, and civility.

Integrity – We commit to GRCC values and take personal responsibility for our words and actions.

GRCC's Mission, Vision, and Values, and the current Strategic Plan are communicated in numerous print materials and on the College's website.

Mission, Vision, and Values Development and Approval Process

The College's [Mission, Vision, and Values](#) (MVV - please see [GRCC Acronym List](#)) were developed as part of the strategic planning process, carried out by the [Strategic Leadership Team](#) (SLT). SLT is co-chaired by the president and associate provost of Instructional Support and Institutional Planning (ISIP) and is broadly represented by nearly 100 faculty, staff, student, and administrative members from all employee groups and departments across the College. The team guides the development and on-going implementation of GRCC's strategic plan, reviews benchmarking data, and offers recommendations for budget priorities. The current Mission statement was developed during the 2011-13 academic years and endorsed by the Board of Trustees (BoT), renewed with the 2013-17 Strategic Plan, and again with the 2018-22 Strategic Plan. During the 2017-18 academic year, the current Vision and Values were revised and approved by the BoT at the [June 4, 2018 meeting](#).

In 2021-22, SLT was charged by the College president to lead the development of GRCC's updated [Strategic Plan](#), with the recommendation to maintain the current MVV and goal categories (Teaching and Learning, Completion and Transfer, Equity, Community Impact, and Infrastructure and Sustainability). Over the 2021-22 academic year, opportunities for GRCC faculty, staff, and students to provide input and feedback to inform the Strategic Plan were provided at six SLT meetings. In addition, the President's Office, Provost's Office, and SLT Executive Team hosted four external stakeholder sessions in spring 2022. These sessions provided an opportunity for the College's community, education, business, and Lakeshore Campus partners to learn more about the strategic planning process and to provide their perspectives about future directions for GRCC, including the Mission and Vision statements. The consensus among internal and external stakeholders was that the College's Mission and Vision accurately reflected the priorities and goals of the College's work and the statements remained unchanged. These efforts resulted in what is now the 2023-28 GRCC Strategic Plan framework endorsed by SLT in April 2022. This SLT Plan framework, with the Mission and Vision statements, Overarching Principles, and Five Strategic Goals was presented to and endorsed by the BoT, constituting formal recognition.

Strategic Plan Framework

Following BoT approval, during the 2022-23 academic year, SLT Executive Team worked with the President's Office to implement the Strategic Plan (SP) framework applying these five principles: (a)

equity encompasses all five goals; (b) there is also interconnection among the goals; (c) every GRCC faculty and staff member is an educator; (d) enrollment is a focus for all GRCC stakeholders; (e) continue to advocate for all programs to lead to living-wage jobs.

While the SP Goals and MVV remained unchanged from the last Strategic Plan, Priorities and Strategic Initiatives (formerly known as [College Action Plans](#) or CAPs) associated with the five Goals are new and reflect the changing needs of GRCC students and community partners.

Strategic Goal 1: Teaching and Learning

The College develops and delivers flexible curriculum across modalities to enhance student learning, ensuring measurable improvements and success.

Goal 1 priorities align with the College's MVV with the aim of [meeting the academic needs](#) of all students so that they can progress and obtain their educational goals. As part of this work, the College will seek to better understand the academic needs of adult learners and implement flexible scheduling and course offerings that address student expectations related to modality and course availability. GRCC will also further tailor support systems to improve retention and student outcomes. Integral to this work is the development of inclusive, equity-centered learning environments.

Strategic Goal 2: Completion and Transfer

The College sustains and continuously improves our focus on successful student goal achievement.

Goal 2 is aligned with the College's MVV with the aim to review data and set priorities around completion and transfer. It seeks to foster a data-informed culture to enhance decision-making and understanding of students' individual definitions of success and needs. Priorities focus on improved career planning by identifying strategies to engage more students with [FOCUS2 and O*NET](#) tools and by leveraging curriculum and community and business partner relationships, as well as the development of targeted retention and graduation strategies to better support students from historically marginalized communities.

Strategic Goal 3: Equity

The College employs standards and benchmarks in access and equity to foster inclusivity and remove barriers through inclusive policies, procedures, and practices.

Goal 3 prioritizes the expansion of student mental health and basic needs support, building on the work of the 2018-22 plan, which included a [Student Food Pantry](#), [technology assistance](#) for students with access limitations, and led to the creation of [GRCC CARES--a network of student support](#). Another priority is the development of an institutional equity and inclusion ethos to guide our policies, procedures, and practices. With this, GRCC aims to increase representation, retention, and belonging among faculty and staff to create a workforce truly reflective of the richness and diversity of the students and communities we serve.

Strategic Goal 4: Community Impact

The College seeks to impact and serve the community by educating students and sustaining partnerships to create a stronger workforce for the future.

Goal 4 priorities include developing a comprehensive [Strategic Enrollment Management \(SEM\) Plan](#) to achieve institutional and community enrollment and retention goals, continue to enhance academic and student services at the Lakeshore Campus facility, and to support further expansion of

K-12 partnerships and collaborations with regional businesses and organizations. This goal aligns with the College's mission by supporting student access and educational goal attainment.

Strategic Goal 5: Infrastructure and Sustainability

The College effectively and responsibly uses our resources to enhance and improve GRCC and our community.

Goal 5 priorities continue the work of the 2018-22 Strategic Plan focusing on [sustainability](#) in College actions and facilities. As part of this effort, the College strives to balance the need for physical space with demands for technology, while delivering academic and student support services seamlessly. Additional priorities include enhancing human resource potential through training and a supportive, inclusive work culture; taking environmental responsibility to reduce our ecological footprint; and ensuring continued fiscal responsibility and resource optimization campus wide.

Educational Opportunities

In fulfillment of the College's mission, all students are welcome at GRCC regardless of preparation or previous educational experiences. The College works, through its programs and policies, to ensure that it is possible for all students to begin their educational experience at GRCC and reach their ultimate educational goals. GRCC students have a wide range of goals and there are [supports to help students achieve those goals](#). They can take courses for personal interest and enrichment, explore academic interests in an Academic Pathway concentration, complete a certificate, earn an associate degree for transfer or an applied associate degree to prepare them to enter the workforce directly, engage in non-credit workforce training for future employment, or gain advanced skills for their current career. GRCC also offers [corequisite developmental educational opportunities](#) to help students gain the skills needed to ensure their success in college-level courses. A wide range of [English as a Second Language](#) courses are also offered to support students who need to build English language skills for employment or for college coursework. GRCC's wide-reaching, high-quality, and affordable educational offerings benefit our students and community and align with our Vision.

Academic Offerings, Student Support Services, and Enrollment Profile are Consistent with Mission

GRCC lives its MVV through the daily work of all employees. The 2023-28 Strategic Plan acknowledges that every College employee is an educator, having a shared responsibility to support students as they work toward their goals. Examples of this work include the following:

- In alignment with the College's Vision, the faculty are responsible for developing and implementing the curriculum, in accordance with the [GRCC Curriculum Policy](#). Faculty use the [Curriculum Development, Course Development and Review](#), and [Program Development and Revision](#) resources and processes to ensure the relevance and rigor of all curricular offerings. Through these processes, faculty define the learning outcomes for students for both courses and programs, as appropriate, and incorporate [General Education Learning Outcomes](#). Academic program and course offerings for the current academic year can be found in the [Academic Catalog](#). GRCC also offers a variety of short-term workforce training and customized corporate [training opportunities](#) for local businesses, as well as 18- and 22-week clock hour-based [job training](#) programs.
- The implementation of the [Academic Pathways](#) (AP) model (known nationally as Guided

Pathways) organizes the College's programs into academic and career areas and provides exploratory curriculum for students who are unsure of their academic and career plans. The model also provides a clear route for students in developmental coursework to next-step college-level courses through the [Academic Foundations](#) program. In alignment with the Mission, this work provides a path to completion and goal achievement for students. Over 100 faculty and staff have participated in updating and maintaining curriculum, reworking the College's application and program declaration forms, making systems changes, and revising New Student Orientation and academic advising experiences.

- The launch of the [GRCC Cares Network](#) of student support services, which provides wrap-around services for students in need. When concerns arise, faculty and other College employees can refer students for academic advising, disability support services, financial aid, occupational support, and tutoring, as well as for assistance with academic concerns, hardships, and basic needs. Faculty and staff work continuously to ensure that referred students get the services that they need at the right time. This one-stop service portal aligns with the College's Mission by addressing barriers to access and success, such as unemployment and food insecurity, allowing students to continue their education and attain their goals.
- The [Academic Governing Council](#) (AGC) is a collaborative initiative between faculty and academic administration to strengthen communication and increase involvement in academic issues and policies. AGC meetings foster broader input and a sense of accountability. At monthly meetings (8 per academic year), AGC [members](#) gather to review academic policies, often leading to discussions of student barriers to success. The AGC regularly reviews [college instruction and students policies](#) based on campus-wide sub-committee research and presentations. In alignment with the Mission and Vision, policies are examined to determine whether they support or create barriers to student success and to ensure that all students have equitable access to education at GRCC. [Examples of changes](#) made to policies include the removal of the minimum GPA requirement for dual enrolled students and changes to the Admission and Placement Policy, placing fewer developmental students into a co-requisite course, PY 100: Strategies for College and Life Success.

Clearly Articulated Mission

GRCC's MVV are available to community members, students, and employees through various locations and modalities. GRCC's website provides this information in the [About GRCC](#) webpage and the [Strategic Planning](#) webpage, emphasizing the guiding principles of our work in the community. Students can find this information both in the [Academic Catalog](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Sources

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

GRCC's Focus on its Educational Responsibilities

GRCC's Vision is to provide relevant educational opportunities that are responsive to the needs of the community and inspire students to meet economic, social, and environmental challenges to become active participants in shaping the world of the future.

The College is committed to being a leader in providing educational opportunities for the West Michigan region by offering a wide variety of accessible courses and programs that support academic and career goal achievement for a student body with wide ranging needs. As a [public community college](#) authorized to operate by the State of Michigan Constitution, GRCC has no direct investors or parent organization. GRCC's actions and decisions are focused on helping students meet their educational goals and supporting lifelong learners in the community. Adherence to that mission is evident in the [allocation of resources](#). Approximately 66% of general operating expenses are directly dedicated to [instruction, instructional support, and student services](#). Other general fund resources support the technology, administrative structure, and physical plant necessary to operate the institution. [New spending is vetted against the Strategic Plan and the College Values before allocation.](#)

The College is required by Michigan law (Section 209(1)) of the Michigan State School Aid Act, as amended) to make all pertinent institutional financial and best practices information accessible to the public. This information includes the annual operational budget, general fund revenue and expenditure projections, debt service obligations, and employee contracts and bargaining agreements. These [Transparency Reports](#) demonstrate that the College's actions and decisions focus on the institution's educational role to serve the public.

The [College's funding](#) is provided mainly through tuition and fees (38%), from local property tax revenue (31%), the State of Michigan (30%), and miscellaneous sources (1%). GRCC students and the local community provide a level of financial support (close to \$88 million) for the College; as such, the College is dedicated to developing and providing academic programming and services that meet our community needs. In 2020-21, [GRCC's total economic impact](#) on the community was \$1 billion. The present value of GRCC's social impact on Michigan is calculated as \$2.8 billion,

including added student income of \$1.9 billion, added business income of \$760.8 million, added income from college activities of \$131.2 million, and \$58.5 million in health-, justice system-, and income assistance-related social savings.

Providing Appropriate Educational Opportunities

The College works with local K-12 systems to provide Early/Middle College and Dual/Concurrent enrollment opportunities and with baccalaureate institutions to ensure that our courses transfer and programs align. [Further, GRCC works with many industry and business partners to develop programming that meets local workforce needs.](#)

High School Partnerships

GRCC [partners with local high schools](#) through several programs, including Concurrent Enrollment, Dual Enrollment, Early/Middle College opportunities, the GEAR UP program, and the Grand Rapids Learning Center. These opportunities provide high school students the chance to get a head start on their degrees and make the transition from high school to college at low or no cost. GRCC partners with Wyoming, Cedar Springs, East Kentwood, GRPS/Ottawa Hills, Kent Intermediate School District (KISD)/Launch U, and Kenowa Hills for Middle College opportunities. Early/Middle College is an application-based 13th year experience that offers the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and up to 60 transferable credits and/or an associate's degree or technical certificate while in high school. Students are dual-enrolled in high school and college courses, with tuition and regular semester fees for the college courses paid by the secondary school partner as part of the district's per pupil state funding. Concurrent Enrollment opportunities allow students to take college classes at their high schools while Dual Enrollment students take classes either online or at one of GRCC's campuses.

Additional educational opportunities that GRCC provides, focusing on [workforce skills development](#), include Skilled Trades Workforce Fridays at the MTEC with Kentwood Public and Northwood Public Schools, school district tours of the MTEC for Kent, Allegan, and Ottawa school districts, and manufacturing trailer visits to high schools in Kent County to give hands-on manufacturing experiences. GRCC also supports CareerQuest held in downtown Grand Rapids for 6-9th grade students as well as the Occupational Summer Camp series for construction, manufacturing, water careers, healthcare, and woodworking.

GRCC engages with and serves high schools through several dedicated personnel roles, including the Dean of Strategic Outreach; Director of High School Partnerships and Student Navigators; Director of GEAR UP Wyoming; Promise Zone Director, Associate Director, and Success Coordinators; and Admissions and Enrollment Coordinators. Supporting departments include High School Partnerships, Admissions and Student Services, Financial Aid, and the Promise Zone. High school personnel are informed of relevant policy updates, upcoming events, and student engagements opportunities. Admissions and Student Services also hosts two annual [High School Professionals Update/Training](#) sessions at the Grand Rapids main and Lakeshore campuses.

GRCC also partners with area high schools and technical centers through [articulation agreements](#) that grant college credit for selected career and technical coursework that students complete during high school. These college credits are applied toward a specific terminal degree at GRCC and are developed in collaboration with GRCC's Academic Schools, Student Records Office, and Admissions and Student Services.

College and University Partnerships

To assist students planning to apply their GRCC credits toward continuing education in both career and technical programming at a college or university, GRCC has established [articulation partnerships with four-year institutions](#). These agreements are developed or operationalized in collaboration with GRCC's Academic Schools, Student Records Office, and Admissions and Student Services. The college credits are applied toward a specific terminal degree at GRCC

GRCC engages with external transfer partners providing financial aid-eligible associate degree options for students intending to transfer—General Transfer Program types and Articulated Transfer Program types. General Transfer Programs prepare students for transfer to a specific major at most four-year colleges or universities. For more specific articulation agreements, Articulated Programs are used to convey collaboration between GRCC and individual Michigan 4-year institutions, outlining requirements for a specific program at the institution. Most Transfer Programs satisfy the [Michigan Transfer Agreement \(MTA\)](#), and prepare students to transfer to complete their bachelor's degree.

Additional examples of GRCC's college and university partnerships are specific [MOUs developed](#) as part of a healthcare collaboration grant for community colleges with the Oakland, Lansing, Alpena, and Muskegon Community Colleges. Similar agreements, supported by the One Workforce Grant, have been developed with Muskegon and Montcalm Community Colleges focusing on advanced manufacturing.

Workforce Partnerships

Another important example of GRCC's service to the community is through the [Job and Workforce Training programs](#). The goal of Job Training programs is to provide hands-on education and training opportunities for students pursuing employment skills. GRCC serves area employers as potential and current employees gain needed skills and credentials that can be applied to credit-based certificates and associate degree programs. The goals of Workforce Training include customized corporate training to provide solutions that meet business and industry needs and certifications and programs that allow employees to advance in their careers, refine current skills, or gain new skills with hands-on training. An example of these partnerships is the MOU between [GRCC and Kent County Habitat for Humanity](#).

Regional Partnerships

A recent addition to GRCC, demonstrating the College's commitment to serving the public's educational needs, is the [Lakeshore Campus](#). Between 1989-2021, in response to the West Michigan lakeshore community's need for affordable and accessible educational opportunities, GRCC offered a [variety of courses and services](#) at multiple locations throughout the Holland area. In August 2021, GRCC combined these locations into a single Lakeshore Campus, providing a [consolidated campus](#) for students seeking post-secondary education and saving more than \$20,000 annually in operating costs. The Lakeshore Campus is a collaborative effort with area businesses, Holland Township, and Holland MAX-Transit, which added a bus stop at the location. [Lakeshore enrollment and operational costs](#), along with all direct revenue and expenses, are monitored annually and the college continues to work with the community for [ongoing support and expansion](#) of programs and services.

Engaging with External Constituencies

GRCC has a long history of engagement with many external constituencies and partners. These

partnerships play a critical role in ensuring the College remains aware of local trends and the academic programming and service needs of students, employers, and the region. These frequent engagements are routinely initiated and maintained at all levels of the organization, including faculty, staff, administration, and the BoT. Partnerships with local businesses and industry drive workforce development programming and allow the college to implement plans to meet current and future regional needs. Transfer programs are developed based on course requirements at regional and statewide colleges and universities. CEO-led groups, such as TalentFirst, the West Michigan Manufacturer's Council, and the Healthcare Employers Council, directly interact with faculty on program development, labor data validation and provide a consistent feedback loop on GRCC graduates. GRCC also regularly engages with local workforce members as part of program advisory committees. College faculty and staff serve on [various local councils](#), participate in employer sector work groups, engage in economic development retention and attraction of businesses to the region, and are part of [planning efforts with development authorities](#), county commissioners, CEO councils, and city government. GRCC's memberships, partnerships, and board and committee affiliations include:

Memberships

- West Michigan Hispanic Center
- Lakeshore Equity Diversity Alliance
- Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce
- The West Coast Chamber
- The Right Place
- Lakeshore Advantage
- Wyoming / Kentwood Chamber of Commerce
- Rotary Club of Grand Rapids

Partnerships

- United Way
- Urban League of Greater Grand Rapids
- Grand Rapids Promise Zone Authority
- West Michigan Construction Institute
- Holland Home Certified Nursing Assistant Lab Partnership
- Advanced Manufacturing Partnership (AMP) Lab with Western Michigan University

Boards and Committees

- Michigan Educational Trust
- The Right Place
- The Chamber of Commerce Foundation
- Career Prep 2030 Committee (Kent Intermediate School District)
- Region 4B West Michigan Works! Workforce Board
- TalentFirst CEO Council and TalentFirst Education to Employment (Committee)
- Manufacturer's Council for West Michigan
- United Way Essential Needs Task Force Development Committee
- KConnect High School to Career Committee

GRCC plays a key role with the regional workforce board, West Michigan Works, and was recognized in 2022 as the #1 Workforce Board/Community College Partnership in the nation by the

National Association of Workforce Boards. In addition to serving on occupational advisory committees, GRCC leaders serve on [Regional Employer Workforce Sector Strategy Workgroups](#), including Discover Manufacturing, Healthcare Employers Council, Agribusiness Council, and the Tech Talent committee. Organizations and community neighborhood groups have been key partners in obtaining [grant awards](#) including from the US Department of Labor, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Education, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Every GRCC occupational program has an [advisory committee](#) that includes employers, faculty members, administrative leaders, community members, as well as program graduates and students currently in the program. Advisory committees review labor data produced by the College's Institutional Research staff, current program enrollment, and proposed or completed curriculum changes. The employers share information about their industry, including necessary employee skills, industry economic outlook, and possible curricular changes for the program under discussion. Advisory committee members also engage in college events, such as student job fairs and classroom tours, and support students attending industry events.

Grand Rapids Promise Zone

One College partnership that directly impacts a large number of GRCC students is the [Grand Rapids Promise Zone Scholarship](#). It is a place-based scholarship that provides qualifying high school students with no-cost access to GRCC to pursue their choice of academic programs. In partnership with the Grand Rapids Promise Zone Authority (GRPZA), GRCC serves as the only landing institution for eligible students. GRPZA staff and GRCC collaborate to provide ongoing program monitoring and oversight. GRCC supports the operational aspects of the partnership with dedicated staff, as well as continued student support through college-wide services, advisors and success coaches. As part of the Promise Zone program, GRCC has created a [mentorship program](#) specifically for Promise Zone students focusing on developing students' social capital and expanding their networking opportunities at GRCC and professionally.

Sources

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- E1-704_C1.B Promise Zone Mentorship Program 02-11-2024
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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Argument

GRCC provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Informed and Engaged Citizenship

GRCC offers students numerous opportunities, through curricular and cocurricular activities, to broaden their understanding of culture and society, enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and gain experiences that prepare them for career success. Foundational to these is GRCC's General Education (GE) Program, embedded in all associate's degrees, that seeks to deepen students' understanding of the intellectual traditions that constitute the liberal arts and sciences. The [GE Program](#) is comprised of three broad areas: Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and also includes requirements in English Composition and Communication. The GE Program develops content knowledge that can be broadly applied to support their educational and career goals. Students can select from over 140 GE courses satisfying the requirements that support their career and academic interests. The [GE Learning Outcomes](#) cover seven areas: civic engagement, communication, critical thinking, cultural competence, information literacy, intellectual curiosity, and problem-solving. Completing an associate's degree at GRCC indicates exposure to and skill competency in the areas.

[Service Learning](#) allows faculty across disciplines to align course learning outcomes and course projects with identified community needs. Students gain real-world experience, deepen their learning, and receive a service-learning designation on their transcript.

GRCC also offers [seminars and lecture series](#) for the GRCC community and the surrounding community. These offerings, sponsored by academic departments, give students a unique opportunity to delve into topics that interest them and to learn more about research activities in the area. Examples include the Psychology Department Speaker Series, Math Seminars, and the Science and Health Talks.

GRCC's [Honors Program](#) is another example of a curricular and cocurricular activity that enhances the academic and civic opportunities for motivated students. The program shapes activities around the areas of leadership, service, research, and creative scholarship. Students participate in community

engagement experiences and are required to participate in [collaborative projects](#), based on their own ideas and interests, which may be presented at local, regional, or national conferences. Faculty provide guidance on the project, support the student throughout the semester, and confirm successful completion.

[Community Engagement](#) is a foundational component of the GRCC Honors Program. Students select a volunteer activity that may be ambassador-led (pre-coordinated), student-led (student arranges), virtual, or an alternative option. Participating and contributing in community activities builds leadership skills and an informed citizenship. GRCC also encourages campus involvement through the [Student Life and Conduct Office](#) where students can find community, develop as leaders, participate in on- and off-campus activities, and access the tools for success. Student Life has two appointed student organizations, [Student Government](#) and [Campus Activities Board \(CAB\)](#). Student Government is responsible for representing the student body and advocating for their concerns. CAB coordinates campus-wide events and offers activities to build student community and encourage campus involvement. Some of CAB's annual events include Welcome Week, Homecoming Week, and the Finals Relaxer. GRCC also supports the local community by serving as a [polling location](#) for the City of Grand Rapids and sponsoring several voter registration drives each year.

[GRCC Athletics](#) provides students the ability to participate in an intercollegiate sport. GRCC is a member of the Michigan Community College Athletic Association (MCCAA) and the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). The College's Athletic Department has a strong tradition of academic and athletic success. Our student-athletes' history of excellence extends beyond the boundaries of the playing field and, while it is exciting to win championships, the program seeks to promote and instill the values of respect, integrity, discipline, and excellence in each student-athlete. Through athletic team participation, students learn to balance many demands and set priorities that will help them build useful skills and reach their goals. The [Student-Athlete Mentorship Program](#) exists to ensure that our student-athletes have the resources necessary to be successful.

Equity-Centered Opportunities and Engagement

The [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(ODEI\)](#) provides innovative equity-centered training and professional development and is committed to fostering partnerships and programming that is responsive to the needs of GRCC stakeholders and the Grand Rapids community. The College acknowledges that [training and professional development](#) are essential factors in cultivating a campus culture that supports DEI. Programming open to students, faculty, staff, and community members has included the Institute for Healing Racism, Intergroup Dialogue, and the Cultural Competence Institute. ODEI also sponsors these annual campus events:

The [Diversity Lecture Series](#) connects the GRCC and West Michigan communities with prolific scholars, thought-leaders, activists, and innovators who have interest in shaping a culture of inclusion and social justice.

[Salute to Women](#) honors women students, employees, and alumni for their accomplishments and gender equity advocacy that impact the GRCC community and beyond.

The ODEI also supports the following community partnerships and events:

The [GIANT Awards](#) and banquet recognizes members of the African American community for their exceptional contributions that have shaped the history, culture, and quality of life of the

Grand Rapids community.

GRCC hosts the [African American Male Achievement Conference](#) (AAMAC). AAMAC is facilitated by the Grand Rapids Urban League and engages students in workshops and activities that affirm their identity and prepare them for the college experience and career opportunities.

GRCC hosts the [Latinx Youth Conference](#) (LYC). The [Hispanic Center of Western Michigan](#) currently facilitates LYC. The original goal was to encourage West Michigan high school students to think about education and career goals beyond high school but since that time, LYC changed its targeted focus to middle school-aged students.

Since 1986, the [Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration](#) has commemorated the legacy of Dr. King. In subsequent years, GRCC partnered with Grand Valley State University and Davenport University to form the Inter-Campus Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, which takes place on three campuses over two days with a focus on today's Civil Rights issues, Dr. King's expansive writings, and evolving thoughts on justice.

In addition to the extensive on-campus programming supporting equity awareness and practices, GRCC is involved in numerous [equity-based community events](#) as well:

The City of Grand Rapids Neighborhood Summit
River for All Community Outreach Sessions
Minority business and micro-business subcontractor events, in partnership with the City of Grand Rapids Economic Development Office and the City Purchasing Office
Kent County Welcome Plan, an immigrant action organization
Roosevelt Park Spring Clean-up Carnival
Puerto Rican Celebracion Boricua
The Committee to Honor Cesar Chavez, meetings and march
Latino Community Coalition

Equity-based practices are also reinforced in GRCC's Workforce Training programs, for example, the Implicit Bias Training for Healthcare Professions, which was recognized as a best practice by the Department of Labor Evaluators.

Student Body and Faculty/Staff Diversity and Equity Practices

In fall 2023, GRCC supported a [diverse student body](#) that was primarily enrolled part-time (71.2%) and most were residents of Kent County Michigan (71.6%). Female students made up 55.1% of the student body and 31.3% were over 25 years old. GRCC students included Hispanic/Latino/Latina (18.5%), Black/African American (10.2%), White/Caucasian (59.4%), Asian (3.8%), American Indian or Alaskan Native (0.6%), two or more races (3.7%), and unknown/unreported (3.8%).

According to the [2023 Fast Facts](#), 53.1% of GRCC's 655 employees are female and 22.1% are people of color. According to Human Resources (HR) data, in October 2023 the 232 full-time [faculty](#) were 55.6% female, 2.6% Hispanic/Latino/Latina, 10.8% Black/African American, 83.6% White/Caucasian, 2.6% Asian, and 0.4% American Indian. Staff demographics were 53% female, and 16.5% people of color. HR monitors employee demographics and [hiring and separation trends](#) and [reports annually to the BoT](#).

GRCC is committed to policies, processes, and culture that creates an inclusive and equitable environment for all students and employees. [GRCC Policy 6.2](#) Equal Opportunity and Non-

Discrimination states that it is policy and practice for GRCC to provide equal educational and employment opportunities in programs, activities, services, employment, and advancement as required by state and federal law. GRCC is committed to identifying and eliminating barriers to prevent discrimination on the basis of the listed protected characteristics within the policy.

GRCC's Human Resources (HR) is committed to a diverse and inclusive workplace. To mitigate bias in our hiring practices, HR implemented the [Evidence-Based Selection Process](#). After a pilot period, GRCC fully implemented the process for all staff positions by Winter 2021. Since launching the process, GRCC has significantly reduced the time to hire staff positions compared to the previous screening committee model. Using this process, data since April 2022 indicates the College has seen a slight increase in hiring new employees who identify as minorities and an increase in internal promotions for minority employees. Given the current labor market, the data is difficult to interpret; however, the process changes are indicating positive outcomes. Quarterly dashboard reporting and the annual Affirmative Action Process provide regular monitoring of the process. The steps for incorporating evidence-based selection are reflected in the [Hybrid Search Process](#).

GRCC supports several gender-related resources to support our student population. [GRCC Policy 6.1](#), the Transgender and Non-Binary Equal Opportunity Policy, for example, clearly addresses the College's commitment to a culture that respects and values all students and employees and fosters understanding of gender identity within the College community. The policy addresses gender inclusive restrooms (available in every campus building), inclusivity on athletic teams and in locker rooms, in names and pronoun use, campus records, and privacy, among others. The College also supports students and employees who are mothers by providing private [lactation spaces](#).

The Non-Discrimination on Basis of Disability Policy, [GRCC Policy 3.2](#), describes GRCC's commitment to ensuring that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability is excluded from, discriminated against, or denied access to participation in academics, employment, or any program, service or activity offered by the College. The College encourages and supports individuals with disabilities in requesting accommodations related to the impact of their disability through the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office or through HR and implements reasonable accommodations to ensure full participation in or benefit from academic instruction, employment or any other program, service or activity offered by the College. Comprehensive practices and policies are also in place to ensure equitable practices, including the [ADA complaint process](#).

Several related policies also have the goal of supporting employees and students with disabilities. These include [GRCC Policy 14.10](#), Service Animals; [GRCC Policy 3.8](#), Audiovisual Captioning Policy; and [GRCC Policy 15.2](#), Web Accessibility.

Supporting Under-Represented, At-Risk, and Special Student Populations

In addition to College policies that ensure accessibility and equal access, GRCC provides services and practices to support many student and staff populations. For example, GRCC provides specialized support to military and veteran students at every stage of their academic journey through the implementation of the [Veterans' Success Center](#) and the work of a dedicated Veteran Success Coordinator. The Center provides one-on-one advising, VA work study programs, educational benefit enrollment and certification, and referrals to resources on campus, in the community, and beyond.

GRCC has been a leader in the use of [Open Educational Resources \(OER\)](#) that allow no- or low-cost sharing of educational information. OER, used in over 30 courses and hundreds of class sections at GRCC, reduces the financial barrier that often comes with the high cost of textbooks and saves students thousands of dollars each semester.

Federally funded [TRIO programs](#) (SSS and STEM) support students who are often underserved in higher education. These programs serve students who are first-generation, low-income, and students with disabilities. Through TRIO, GRCC provides support that is unique to individual student needs including academic and financial guidance, tutoring, personal counseling, workshops, and cultural experiences to ensure students are on track to completion of their educational goals. Each year, TRIO programs at GRCC serve 600 students.

A state financial aid program, [Michigan Reconnect](#), seeks to reduce educational barriers for Michiganders 25 or older without a college degree. Since February 2021, this program has provided more than 1,000 GRCC students with in-district tuition coverage to pursue an associate degree or occupational certificate. The program has been expanded to temporarily include residents 21 or older.

During the pandemic, GRCC expanded or developed additional programs and services to meet emerging student needs. The [GRCC Cares Network](#), for example, provides one-stop, easily accessible student support services. Faculty and other College employees can refer students for academic advising, disability support services, financial aid, occupational support, and tutoring, as well as for assistance with academic concerns, hardships, and basic needs. Students can also self refer through the Handraise feature in Navigate. Additionally, GRCC has committed to a two-year cost-sharing partnership with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). We are currently in the second year of this agreement. The agreement allows a Family Independence Specialist (FIS) to work only with GRCC Students. This position has a hybrid schedule to meet students remotely or on campus. In addition, we have trained Navigators who can help students complete the online application for MDHHS benefits. Some of the benefits include food, housing and child care subsidies for those who qualify. Identified staff members are able to issue an internal referral through Navigate to connect students to the FIS.

[GRCC's Student Food Pantry](#) and nine Snack Pantries, operated by GRCC's Student Government, the GRCC Foundation, and the Office of Student Life and Conduct, are designed to meet immediate food needs of students by providing non-perishable, refrigerated, and frozen food items and other necessities to students and their families.

Climate of Respect and Inclusion

GRCC fosters respect by encouraging an inclusive environment based on collaborative decision-making using input from students, faculty, staff, and administrators from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. GRCC's policies, practices, and priorities — as developed through the work of various College groups, including AGC, SLT, the ODEI Task Force, and accreditation teams — are based on collaborative, inclusive practices that include all internal constituencies to inform decision making.

[AGC](#) develops and reviews academic policies and consists of administrative leadership and faculty from every department. Numerous AGC standing committees include the General Education, Curriculum Advisory, and Distance Learning Faculty Advisory teams. In addition to the standing committees, AGC ad-hoc committees include broad representation to research and address emerging

issues and concerns. These teams allow additional opportunities for cross-campus participation and greater inclusion.

[SLT](#), which guides the development and implementation of the strategic plan, includes representation from a wide range of campus groups, departments, offices, and organizations, including student leadership positions and representatives from the College's BoT. In addition to the cross-college membership on SLT, numerous teams with representation from across the College support Strategic Initiatives. The diverse voices on SLT and these teams are key in guiding inclusive services, programs, operations, and practices at GRCC.

GRCC's [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) (ODEI) is also foundational to the inclusive practices and approaches at GRCC. ODEI works to align services and programs with the goals of SLT and the College's Strategic Plan. Equity has been identified as an overarching goal of the 2023-28 Strategic Plan, and it encompasses the five Strategic Goals.

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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

GRCC's Mission drives the work of the College and guides the institution's long-term goals and daily operations. Activities and programs are developed with the goal of supporting both the academic and non-educational needs of GRCC's regional community of learners. The College continually works within the region to understand and support employer and community needs through program development and equitable and flexible access to those programs. GRCC's academic programs serve students with wide ranging goals from attaining new employment skills or transferring to a college or university. In keeping with its Mission, GRCC has responded to recent student challenges including economic barriers and housing and food insecurities by implementing a service and support network so students can continue on their educational path. GRCC clearly communicates its Mission to the community, but most clearly articulates the Mission through its actions. GRCC has a long history of being a community leader, supporting student goal attainment, providing educational opportunities, and contributing to the economic well-being of the West Michigan regional community.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Argument

2A: Mission Development

Mission Development and Adoption

Grand Rapids Community College's [Mission, Vision, and Values](#) were developed as part of the strategic planning process carried out by the [Strategic Leadership Team](#) (SLT - see [GRCC Acronym List](#)). SLT broadly represents the College community and is co-chaired by the president and associate provost of Instructional Support and Institutional Planning. The current Mission statement was originally endorsed by the [Board of Trustees \(BoT\) in 2010](#), and [endorsed again in 2014](#), along with the 2014-17 Strategic Plan. In 2018, revisions to the institutional Vision and Values and revised Strategic Goals (Ends) were [endorsed by the BoT](#).

In 2021-22, at the end of the Strategic Plan cycle, the College president charged SLT to lead the development of the 2022-25 Strategic Plan, including reviewing the College's Mission. During the 2021-22 academic year, GRCC faculty, staff, and students provided input and feedback to inform the Mission statement. In addition, the President's Office, Provost's Office, and SLT Executive Team hosted four external stakeholder sessions in March and April 2022 with the goal of reviewing the College's Mission, Vision, and Values, and providing feedback on the direction of the 2022-25 Strategic Plan. The consensus among College stakeholders was that the Mission accurately reflects the priorities and goals of GRCC's work and the statement should remain unchanged. These efforts resulted in the [2022-25 Strategic Plan framework](#), endorsed by SLT in April 2022, and presented to and approved with [Board input by the BoT on June 13, 2022](#). The current [Strategic Plan, extended to 2028](#), was approved by the BoT on May 15, 2023.

This ongoing review process of the Strategic Plan, along with the College's Mission, Vision, and Values is incorporated into the [SLT Bylaws](#). SLT is responsible for guiding the development and ongoing implementation of the Strategic Plan, reviewing benchmarking data, studying budget realities, and offering recommendations for budget priorities. In addition, according to the [Board](#)

[Planning and Agenda Policy](#), the BoT reviews the College's Mission at each August planning meeting (as held under the Board's sole discretion).

Integrity in College Operations

Integrity in the College's operations begins with the BoT as the governing board of the institution. [The Board Member's Code of Conduct](#) emphasizes the expectation of ethical conduct of both individual members and group actions, including proper use of authority. [Board policies](#) provide the foundation for fair, equitable, and ethical behaviors for the College president, including appropriate budgeting and forecasting, means for monitoring executive performance, appropriate treatment of individuals, as well as expectations for communication and counsel to the Board.

Building on this foundation are the [College policies](#), which define College operations and policies covering human resources processes; instruction; student issues; College relations; tuition, fees, and scholarships; business functions; building and sites; risk management; and information technology. The [policies are periodically reviewed](#) by College stakeholders for accuracy and comprehensiveness. The policy administrator for the Office of General Counsel maintains a record of all College policies as well as their review dates. Policies pertaining to instruction and students are reviewed by GRCC's [Academic Governing Council](#) (AGC). The Administrative Policy Committee, chaired by the General Counsel, with membership from all College employee groups, provides input regarding all new or revised administrative policies that are not within AGC's scope.

Included in all College policies is an emphasis on fair, equitable, and ethical behavior, especially in the policies related to an [individual's personally identifiable information](#), [Clery Act Compliance](#), [reporting child abuse and neglect](#), [FERPA](#), [complaints regarding violations of privacy and confidentiality](#), [misconduct policy](#), [conflict of interest](#), [Title IX sexual harassment](#), [sexual misconduct](#), [equal opportunity and non-discrimination](#), [free speech and expressive activity](#), and [ethics reporting](#).

Codes of Conduct and Standards

Also included in the College policies are ethical codes and standards of conduct for faculty ([Faculty Ethics Policy](#)), staff ([APSS Code of Ethics](#)), administrators ([Administrator Ethics Code](#)), and students ([Student Code of Conduct](#)).

The Student Code of Conduct was developed to communicate expectations plainly and directly. The [Student Code of Conduct is reviewed](#) every three years under the direction of the Student Conduct Administrator to ensure the content is ethical, fair, and accurate.

In addition to the Student Code of Conduct, student expectations are presented through the [Student Resources](#) webpage, on the [Student Conduct webpage](#), and further defined in the [Student Life policies](#) and [Academic Standing policies](#). These electronic publications ensure visibility to all stakeholders, inform students of the College's expectations regarding general conduct, classroom conduct, and academic honesty, and outline procedures regarding potential violations.

Reporting Processes and Procedures

Ethical reporting processes are explained through the [Student Complaint Process](#), the [Student Academic Grievance Procedure](#), the [Behavioral Intervention Team \(BIT\)](#), and the [Crime and Clery Act Reporting](#) procedures.

To ensure that reporting ethics concerns can be done easily and with assurance of confidentiality, GRCC developed the [Ethics Monitoring System](#), providing students, staff, and members of the community with multiple means of reporting concerns.

Ensuring Ethical Financial Operations

GRCC has policies and procedures that ensure integrity in the institution's financial operations. This process includes [BoT review](#) of the annual Financial Report along with approving single item expenditures over \$100,000. Similarly, the BoT also has [regular budgetary work sessions](#) scheduled throughout the year. In the interest of transparency in financial and budget operations, GRCC follows state requirements for [Transparency Reporting](#). College finances are independently audited annually and [results of the audit](#) are presented to the Board in open session.

The GRCC Foundation also has [policies and procedures](#) to ensure integrity in operations and use of funds.

Ensuring Ethical Academic Operations

GRCC utilizes multiple means to ensure ethical practice in academic operations by being transparent about student rights, student expectations, and College processes involving students. In addition to the Student Conduct policies and procedures, student rights are shared and protected through the [FERPA](#) (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) student rights webpage and the [Title IX](#) sexual harassment policy and reporting process. Employees, students, and staff are protected under the [Equal Employment Opportunity](#) and [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) policies and reporting processes, as well as the accessible [ADA accommodation request process](#).

Academic research at GRCC is monitored and protected through the institution's [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#), which reviews and approves all research proposals to protect human subject rights and ensure ethical practices.

Ensuring Ethical HR, Auxiliary, and Business Operations

GRCC's [Human Resources](#) office follows all Equal Opportunity policies and practices to ensure fair, ethical, and equitable treatment of current and potential employees. HR communicates and facilitates discussions about EO policies as well as employee contracts, handbooks, and policies.

GRCC's [Purchasing](#) department ensures integrity in auxiliary functions by maintaining an efficient and fair procurement process that is in accordance with federal and state procurement regulations and encourages the inclusion of all suppliers. Integrity and ethical behavior in the area of College operations are guided by [numerous policies and practices](#) related to appropriate use of College resources, purchasing, and contracting. [Ethical business processes](#) and operations are also defined by College policies, including Employee Reimbursement (Policy 11.1), Use of College Equipment (Policy 11.6), Investment Policy (Policy 11.8), Purchasing Policy (Policy 11.15), Lobbying (Policy

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Argument

Accuracy of Institutional Information

GRCC ensures accuracy in both internal and external communications to all stakeholders, including employees, students, and the Grand Rapids area community, through a rigorous [vetting process](#) for all public-facing information on the College website, as well as all campus communication. GRCC [applies guidelines](#) for fair and accurate use of language using the AP Style Guide as well as the Disability Language Style Guide, Guidelines for Gender-Fair Use of Language, and the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists' Association Stylebook.

The GRCC website is an essential avenue for conveying information about the College to students and the public. The site is updated regularly by College departments/units with the support of GRCC's [Web and Digital Strategies Department](#). GRCC applies the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) to ensure web content is accessible to all stakeholders. GRCC recently completed a [comprehensive website revision](#) informed by input from students and stakeholders to ensure that this essential means of conveying College information is comprehensive, accurate, and user friendly. Supporting this ongoing work is the [Web Advisory Council](#), with representatives from across the College, including Student Life; Faculty/Schools; Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Admissions; and Instructional Support and Institutional Planning.

GRCC's [Communications Department](#) tells the GRCC story using public relations, advertising, social media, print/electronic publications, and other multimedia tools. The Communications Department makes information about the College [available to local media](#) by publishing regular updates on topics such as tuition rates, BoT decisions, campus initiatives, programming, grant awards, and other news.

The [Institutional Research \(IR\)](#) office serves the GRCC community by bridging the gap between the data collected by the College and effective use of the data for informed decision-making. The main functions of IR are to provide stewardship for all College data and to collect and analyze data for internal and external reporting needs ethically and appropriately. IR also reports institutional data annually through the College's [Fast Facts](#) webpage.

Accessible Institutional Information

In addition to ensuring accurate information for all stakeholders, GRCC ensures that key institutional information is also easily accessible.

Governance and Policies. GRCC's BoT officers, policies, activities, and decisions are publicly available on the BoT webpage, including meeting agendas and proceedings. Current Board members' biographies, reflecting their educational backgrounds and community involvement, are also available. [College policies](#) are also publicly available.

Faculty and Staff. The College's searchable Faculty/Staff Directory on the College's website contains work-related contact information, department, title, and optional biography with educational and work experience. [Department webpages](#) also link to the faculty and staff who work in these areas and include contact information, title, and optional biography.

College and Program Accreditation. GRCC's Accreditation webpage provides access to information about all College and program accreditation information. The webpage describes the College's HLC accreditation status, provides updates on the upcoming reaffirmation process, and includes links to the HLC's Statement of Accreditation Status and the Accreditation Status Confirmation pages. The webpage also includes program accreditation status, professional licensure and certification information, professional memberships, as well as licensure pass rates. GRCC's accredited programs include several in the health professions, as well as the automotive, culinary arts, music, visual arts, child development, and criminal justice programs.

GRCC Today, Raider Connect, and Social Media accounts. Communication with internal and external GRCC communities is facilitated using three main vehicles: *GRCC Today*, a daily employee newsletter; *Raider Connect*, a newsletter for students; and social media accounts via Facebook (Grand Rapids Community College), X (twitter.com/grcc), YouTube (GRCCtv), and Instagram (grandrapidscc).

The Collegiate. GRCC students publish an online student newspaper, providing campus and local news, features, art and entertainment, sports, and opinion designed to keep students informed on campus happenings. *The Collegiate* student staff also maintain related Facebook and X (Twitter) accounts.

Accuracy of Information about Academic Offerings, Requirements, and Costs

College Catalog. GRCC's online catalog is a comprehensive listing of current information regarding academic programs, policies, degree requirements, procedures, and course offerings. The catalog is updated annually each March. All [modifications to course descriptions and program requirements](#) are communicated via a link on the catalog's homepage. A fully electronic catalog ensures greater accuracy as modifications and corrections can be made and communicated quickly.

Student Orientation. New Student Orientation provides students with important information on College life and is another vehicle for presenting the College experience clearly, accurately, and comprehensively. The content presented at Student Orientation is regularly reviewed and updated. This College policy was most recently updated and approved by [AGC on March 15, 2022](#).

Syllabi. Expectations and common components for course syllabi, the primary mode of communication with students about course expectations and policies, are defined by [College Policy 7.16](#). The College also provides faculty with a [syllabus template](#) that shows the minimum components required for every syllabus. Faculty submit copies of their syllabi to their department office, usually by the end of the first week of the semester, which is also made available to their Associate Dean. When a faculty member is observed, the observer also [reviews the course syllabus](#) to be sure it complies with the Common Syllabus Template.

Blackboard. GRCC uses Blackboard for its Learning Management System (LMS). This online tool supports GRCC's courses, is the delivery platform for online courses, and is often the primary means of communication for faculty to students on weekly course activities, assignments, and updates. The LMS provides easy access to course information and requirements, such as the syllabus, for all courses. It also provides important institutional information, including links to tutoring, Blackboard help, and student support, from the [Institution Page](#), a hub page with easily accessible information for students.

Class Schedules. Class schedules for the upcoming academic year are available through the course registration system (powered by PeopleSoft). These schedules provide information on every type of course offered from noncredit apprentice and job training to those leading to an associate's degree. The course offerings are updated with class information annually, allowing students the ability to select courses based on meeting days and times, location, and modality.

Tuition and Fees. The College website publishes current tuition and fees information, a program tuition calculator, information on how tuition is determined, estimated cost of attendance with allocations for books, transportation, housing and other expenses, a net price calculator, financial aid and scholarships, payment plans, residency requirements, tax information, and important deadlines. Additional information and links to external sites are provided for other funding sources, such as the Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver and veterans benefits.

Scholarship Availability. The GRCC Foundation has over 300 scholarship opportunities available for students, readily accessible through a single application process. The [Financial Aid Office](#) also provides information about federal student aid, state aid, and veterans/military aid, and links to external scholarship information and applications.

Support for Institutional Claims

GRCC supports its claims regarding career opportunities, contributions to the educational experience through community engagement, experiential learning, honors education, athletics, and student life activities.

Career Planning/Information. GRCC encourages students to engage in career planning with accurate information and provides access to several career planning and exploration tools, including GRCC Focus2 and O*NET. O*NET is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor and provides current information on work context, needed skills for careers, education requirements, and wage and employment trends. GRCC programs listed on the College's website are linked to related careers on the O*NET site.

Service Learning. Experiential learning through service learning projects is an important part of GRCC's learning culture. The benefits of service learning, examples of experiential learning

engagement, and videos showcasing past projects are communicated through the GRCC Service Learning webpage. Faculty can review the process for developing service learning projects and apply to have service learning connected to a selected course. Students can register to receive a service learning transcript designation upon successful completion of their project. These connections with local industry, non-profits, and partner groups are foundational to GRCC's community connections and student learning.

Study Away Opportunities. Studying in other regions and countries can provide enriching educational experiences. GRCC Study Away programs apply program learning outcomes, such as a Nursing Program trip to Costa Rica or a trip for Culinary Program students to Austria and Germany, or course-based outcomes, such as a Literature course hiking trip to Spain. Students learn about the opportunities, criteria for participation, costs, and course requirements from the Study Away webpage. [Faculty developing Study Away experiences](#) must meet faculty eligibility requirements and the experience must meet Study Away curricular standards.

Honors Program. GRCC supports an active Honors Program for students seeking to deepen their college experience. To be eligible for the program, students must meet academic and leadership criteria clearly outlined on the Honors Program webpage. Once accepted into the program, students develop individual academic plans that may include collaborative projects and community engagement experiences. They also have access to scholarships and contacts at transfer institutions.

Athletics. GRCC supports an extensive athletic program that offers women's basketball, softball, cross country, volleyball, and soccer and men's basketball, baseball, cross country, golf, and soccer. The College's intercollegiate sports program [supports student-athletes](#) by fostering an environment that contributes to academic and athletic excellence and allows them to achieve their educational and sportsmanship goals.

Student Life. College life extends beyond the classroom. At GRCC, students can find opportunities to engage with the campus community from athletic events, clubs, and activities, to professional organizations and cultural connections. Student Life supports student leadership development through two student organizations—Student Government and Campus Activities Board—and a broad range of [student organizations](#) that are organized by students, supported by a faculty member, and approved by the College.

Sources

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E2-151_C2.B Course Syllabus Review 02-07-2024
E2-154_C2.B Student Orientation Policy Approval 02-06-2024
E2-156_C2.B Financial Aid Information 02-07-2024
E2-57_C2.B.1 Web Digital Content Policy 11-2-23
E2-58_C2.B.1 Editorial Resources 11-2-23
E2-59_C2.B.2 Web Digital Strategy 02-06-2024
E2-60_C2.B.2 Editorial Resources 11-2-23
E2-61_C2.B.2 Web Digital Content Policy 11-3-23
E2-62_C2.B.1 Web Advisory Council 11-2-23
E2-62a_C2.B.1 Web Redesign Meetings 02-02-2024
E2-63_C2.B.2 Communications 02-06-2024

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E2-78_C2.B.1 Common Syllabus Components Policy 11-2-23
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E2-83_C2.B.2 Student Financial Services 02-06-2024
E2-84_C2.B.2 Scholarships 11-2-23
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E2-87_C2.B.2 Service Learning 11-2-23
E2-88_C2.B.2 Study Away 11-2-23
E2-89_C2.B.2 Study Away Resources for Faculty 11-2-23
E2-90_C2.B.2 Honors Program 11-2-23
E2-91_C2.B.2 About GRCC Athletics 11-2-23
E2-92_C2.B.2 Student-Athlete Academic Support 02-07-2024
E2-93_C2.B.2 Student Life and Conduct 02-06-2024
E2-93_C2.B.2 Student Life and Conduct 11-3-23
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2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

Board's Experience and Training

The [governing board of GRCC](#) is a seven-member elected Board of Trustees (BoT). The College president serves as *ex officio* while the seven trustees are elected at large by the community to overlapping six-year terms of office. The BoT operates under a [Policy Governance model](#) focusing on the College's Mission, Vision, and Values, and applying the College's Strategic Plan to make decisions.

Several [established meetings](#) provide background and training for new and ongoing trustees. First, the BoT chairperson holds an orientation meeting with new trustees where the [Governance Statement Reaffirmation](#) and board policies are reviewed. [Board policies](#) define board operation, including the legal and fiduciary responsibilities. Trustees alternate attending SLT meetings throughout the year, which provides them with opportunities to learn about GRCC's operations. GRCC trustees also attend the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) Summer Conference and the annual Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) conference, providing opportunities to discuss Board governance at the state and national levels. In addition, one trustee represents the Board at the quarterly MCCA Board of Directors meetings.

The community's public election of board members, as defined by State of Michigan law ([PA 331 of 1966](#)), along with a clear set of Board policies ensure informed decision making and autonomy of the BoT. Collectively, [Board policies](#) outline the goals, executive limitations, board-executive linkage, and governance process. Specific policies ensure the Board's ability to make informed decisions about [financial and academic](#) issues by guaranteeing access to essential information (Board policies: Board Planning & Agenda, Asset Protection, Budgeting/Forecasting, Financial Condition, Academic Freedom). In addition to the Budgeting/Forecasting and Financial Condition policies, Michigan State law ([Section 143.3 PA 331 of 1966](#)) and the [Board Job Description](#) require the BoT to appoint a competent auditor to complete an annual audit of GRCCs financial records. Together, these BoT

policies and legal requirements allow the BoT to meet its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

Board Priorities

Based on the [Board Planning and Agenda policy](#), the BoT holds regular meetings, work sessions, and budget work sessions, each structured to include education, input, and deliberation. The Board Job Description Policy articulates the BoT's responsibility to prioritize the stability of the institution. Specifically, section 2.A in this policy states that the BoT is to enact written policies that operate at the broadest level to define ends, long-range goals, and priorities. Evidence of this work is most clearly demonstrated in the [BoT's actions to endorse](#) proposed revisions to the College's Mission, Vision, and Values.

Internal and External Constituency Concerns

According to the Board Job Description policy, one of the BoT's principal responsibilities is to serve as a liaison between GRCC and the broader community. The [Board Member's Code of Conduct](#) also states that trustees "must maintain loyalty to the interests of the citizens and the College district." To meet these obligations, the BoT holds public meetings with an [open comment](#) period enabling direct interaction with faculty, staff, students, and the public. [Board meeting agendas](#) are made public and internal constituents are regularly made aware of upcoming meetings. Meeting minutes are made available at the Office of the Board of Trustees and at the [Board Proceedings](#) webpage. [Meetings are recorded](#) and uploaded to YouTube with links to the recordings available on the Board Agenda webpage. The Chief of Staff provides a [meeting recap](#) to the College community via email following each BoT meeting. The [Board webpage](#) also provides trustee biographies, board role, and contact information.

The Board's [Standing Agenda](#) ensures that the BoT is provided with important updates on strategic planning and College finances, and that the trustees have the opportunity to hear from internal constituent groups. The progress made with each of the strategic planning goals, finance updates, and opportunities for officers of the Student Government Association, the GRCC Foundation, and the Faculty Association to address the Board are also included.

Board Autonomy

The BoT has well-established practices and policies that support its status as a single entity with one voice on all matters deliberated by the Board, not as a group of individuals. Board unity supports independence from undue influences and external parties as decisions are made publicly and by vote. According to section 3 of the [Policy Governance Statement](#), once decisions are made, dissenting members back the Board's decision. The BoT's [Board Member's Code of Conduct](#), which defines individual ethical behavior on the part of trustees, includes avoiding conflicts of interest with their fiduciary responsibility and not exercising individual authority over the institution beyond what is outlined formally. In addition, the [Board's Job Description](#) states that "No member of the Board may receive any compensation for services rendered, except they may be reimbursed for expenses authorized by the Board."

Also reflecting BoT autonomy from donors or external interests is the existence of the independent

GRCC Foundation. While the BoT chairperson, treasurer, and one other board member sit on the [GRCC Foundation Board](#), the Foundation's Governing Board has the separate responsibility to vet and receive monetary and other gifts to the College.

Board Involvement in Day-to-Day Management

The Board's governance role is well defined in the Policy Governance Statement and specific Board policies, including the Board Job Description and the Governing Style Policy. Each affirms that leadership and direction are determined through Board policies, that the role of the BoT includes serving as a link between the College and the public, and that the Board's responsibility centers on monitoring both the institution's and the president's performance.

Additional Board policies that ensure the College's day-to-day operations and management are determined by College staff include the [Delegation to the President](#) and the Board - Staff - Student - Community Relations policies. The Delegation to the President policy states that while the Board is responsible for adopting broad College goals, implementation and detailed policy development is explicitly delegated to the president. It is Board member practice to respond to community concerns by offering to bring the issue to the president, not by acting as a representative of the Board. This practice is consistent with the [Board - Staff - Student - Community Relations policy](#).

The Board's [Academic Freedom](#) policy recognizes that faculty members are entitled to freedom in the discussion of their subject in the classroom. Additionally, faculty's voice in academic matters is ensured through the [AGC](#), a collaborative initiative of both faculty and academic administration with the goal to strengthen communication and increase involvement in academic issues and policies. AGC recommendations are, upon approval by the provost, implemented on a college-wide basis.

Sources

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- E2-101_C2.C.1 Board of Trustee Academic and Financial Policies 11-3-23
- E2-102_C2.C.1 Section 143.3 of PA 331 11-3-23
- E2-103_C2.C.1 Board Job Description 11-3-23
- E2-105_C2.C.2 Actions to Adopt Example 11-3-23
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- E2-115_C2.C.4 Board Job Description 11-3-23
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- E2-118_C2.C.5 Board-Staff-Citizens Relations 11-3-23
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2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

The leadership, faculty, and staff at GRCC are committed to freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. Evidence of this commitment can be found in several College policies and the Board of Trustees' Academic Freedom policy.

College policy 3.9, [Free Speech and Expressive Activity](#), promotes the exchange of ideas “by fostering free speech, assembly, and other expressive activities...while maintaining a safe, secure, and appropriate education and work environment for all persons.” This policy honors freedom of thought and expression and asserts that these values are essential to institutions of higher learning and ensured by the Michigan and United States Constitutions.

College policy 7.2, [Faculty Ethics](#), attests to the responsibility of faculty to protect academic freedom, to help preserve the highest standards of teaching and scholarship, and to advance the Mission of the College as an institution of higher learning.

College policy 8.30, [Student Code of Conduct](#), asserts that students have the right to freedom of expression, association, and assembly; and they may express their views and support causes by means that do not disrupt College operation. In the classroom, they may take reasoned exception to data or views offered and reserve judgment about matters of opinion, while being responsible for understanding the course content.

The Board [Academic Freedom Policy](#) affirms the College's commitment to freedom of expression and commitment to the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning and upholds the rights of students to express their views and take reasoned exception to views offered.

To support the pursuit of broad knowledge and freedom of expression, GRCC's academic offerings are built on a comprehensive [General Education](#) program and clearly structured [Academic Pathways](#), offering students avenues to discuss wide ranging topics to “combine content knowledge with broadly applicable academic skills such as critical thinking and communication.” GRCC also supports and encourages free speech and expressive activity through extensive campus activities, including the [Diversity Lecture Series](#), which helps “attendees consider different perspectives through cultural engagement, critical thought, and civil discourse.”

Sources

E2-121_C2.D Free Speech Expressive Activity Policy 11-3-23

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E2-52_C2.A.2 Institutional Review Board 11-2-23

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

Ethical Research Practices

Because GRCC is primarily a teaching institution, research conducted on campus most often focuses on classroom practices, the scholarship of teaching and learning, or fulfilling degree requirements. GRCC's [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#), in compliance with the National Research Act (Public Law 93-348), was established in 2009 to oversee research activities at the College. Following [College Policy 3.1](#), IRB monitors the research conducted at the College and protects the rights and safety of human subjects. The fourteen-member Board has diverse membership with respect to gender, race, cultural background, and professional expertise.

Ethical Scholarship and Academic Practices

GRCC supports students as they become active learners who conduct academic research and use information resources. Classroom faculty and faculty librarians teach students how to determine and retrieve appropriate resources and how to use information ethically to complete their academic work and conduct academic and investigative research both in- and outside of the classroom. [GRCC's librarians](#) often serve as classroom resources for faculty and students, providing workshops on the ethical use of information resources, and as Library and Learning Commons (LLC) resources, interacting with students, faculty, and staff about their information needs. The LLC webpage provides the online English Composition Information [Literacy Toolkit](#), a collection of materials that focuses on correctly documenting and using sources and source materials. The Toolkit supports learners in English composition courses, primarily EN101, which provides foundational academic skills and is required of all degree-seeking students.

Because many incoming students lack an understanding of plagiarism and other elements of academic honesty, the topic is covered in the [College Learning Studies \(CLS\) 100](#) - First Year Experience program, along with a required information literacy component. To reinforce these discussions, the LLC's CLS-100 Subject Guide has an [Academic Honesty](#) tab with information about plagiarism, information literacy, as well as specific examples of common ethical issues faced by

college students.

The [Student Code of Conduct](#) (Section 2, Academic Honesty) also addresses academic honesty and clearly explains GRCC's expectations around personal integrity and student use of information resources. This document describes plagiarism and fabrication as forms of academic dishonesty.

Ethical Institutional Academic Practices

As an institution of higher education, GRCC endeavors to follow ethical practices related to its academic practices. Several College policies address these practices and define expected behavior and actions on the part of faculty, staff, and administrators.

For example, [College Policy 3.0, Copyright](#) defines the College's adherence to federal law and statutes, placing administrative responsibility on the GRCC library to coordinate implementation and individual responsibility for responsible and ethical use of materials on every member of the GRCC community.

[College Policy 7.17 Library Collection Development](#) defines the College's responsibility to "collect and own materials that support curriculum and learning and present balanced viewpoints, even if some readers may consider certain content objectionable; the Library will not censor any materials deemed 'offensive' or 'morally reprehensible' in terms of balanced viewpoints and freedom of expression."

[College Policy 7.12, Faculty Ethics](#) not only stresses ethical and responsible conduct but also the faculty's responsibility to "protect academic freedom, to help preserve the highest standards of teaching and scholarship." In addition, Principle 1 of the policy defines the role of Faculty as scholars, emphasizing their obligation to "exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge" and "practice intellectual honesty."

[College Policy 7.15, Prior Learning Assessment](#) defines ethical and responsible practices for assessing student learning through collected evidence of skills and knowledge acquired outside of traditional educational settings.

[College Policy 6.18, Acceptable Use of Technology](#) defines appropriate and ethical use of campus technology, including external network connections, while affirming academic freedom and freedom of expression.

Policies on Academic Honesty and Integrity

Through classroom instruction and academic practices, GRCC endeavors to ensure that students understand academic dishonesty, the College policies related to academic dishonesty, and the implications of violations of the codes and policies.

As defined by the [Common Syllabus Component policy \(7.16\)](#), course syllabi must contain a section on the course's Academic Honesty Policy, describing the outcomes of violations on course success. Outcomes can include a warning through grade reduction, earning a failing grade in the course, or the faculty member can refer the incident to the Student Conduct Office where additional investigation and potential institutional sanctions can occur.

The Student Conduct Office's webpage provides access to the Student Code of Conduct, including information about [academic honesty](#), academic dishonesty, the potential consequences of academic dishonesty, and the [process and procedures](#) related to the violations. All policy violations are directed to the Director of Student Conduct, who follows the discipline procedure, including student notification and a meeting to discuss the charges. Pending action on the charges, the student's status is not altered, nor is their right to be on campus and attend classes suspended, except for reasons relating to the safety and/or wellbeing of other GRCC students, employees, or property.

Sources

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E2-130_C2.E.3 CLS 100 - Intro to College - New Student Experience 11-3-23
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E2-52_C2.A.2 Institutional Review Board 11-2-23

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

GRCC is committed to practices, processes, and policies that ensure the College acts with integrity and holds itself to the highest standards of ethical and responsible behavior. College policies reinforce and lay the foundation for ethical, reasonable, and responsible practices and processes. College processes ensure that the standards are maintained. As part of the commitment to ethical behavior, the College represents itself to students and the community with transparency and accuracy regarding programs and requirements, governance structure, and accreditation status. GRCC supports academic freedom for faculty and students and freedom of expression for all stakeholders. The GRCC Board of Trustees maintains a defined role of institutional oversight, but delegates day-to-day operations to the president. In turn, the president supports faculty, staff, and administration in carrying out their work to ensure that academic and nonacademic needs of students are met.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

Current and Appropriate Courses and Programs

GRCC's curriculum, course formats, and credit hour requirements are reviewed and assessed on a five-year cycle following the [College's Course Format and Credit Hour \(7.13\)](#) policy.

As part of [the course approval and revision process](#), faculty and academic departments review the courses to ensure alignment with policy requirements, transferability guidelines, and appropriate prerequisite and course sequencing. Learning outcomes and course descriptions are also updated to reflect changes to course content. After initial review, the process moves to the dean of the appropriate school, and then to the [Curriculum Approval Team](#) (CAT - see [GRCC Acronym List](#)) for final review and approval.

General Education courses are reviewed by the [General Education Review Team](#) (GERT) to ensure transferability as general education courses to benchmarked institutions, alignment with the correct distribution areas, and course outcomes linked to a minimum of two [General Education Learning Outcomes](#) (GELOs).

GRCC offers courses that fulfill students' educational needs, including:

[General Education courses](#): To meet the learning outcomes within specific general education course distribution groups. GRCC's general education courses are aligned to the [Michigan Transfer Agreement](#) (MTA) to support students' seamless transfer to a four-year institution in the state of Michigan.

Program Requirement courses: To meet the learning outcomes for specific GRCC programs.

Elective courses: To expand learning opportunities for degree-seeking students.

Community Interest courses: To meet learning needs of non-degree seeking students based on

expressed interests or needs.

Continuing Education courses: To meet specific requirements of a profession for continuing education credit.

Developmental courses: To meet the learning needs of students needing supplemental instruction to reach college-level skills. These [Academic Foundations Program](#) courses are non-transferable prerequisite or corequisite courses and earned credits cannot be applied toward certificates or degrees. Students are placed into these courses based on [placement test scores](#) in accordance with the [Admission and Placement Policy](#) (8.2).

GRCC offers 175 degrees and certificates, grouped by curricular requirements into 12 [Academic Pathways](#). Certificates and degrees are defined in the [Curriculum Policy](#) (7.18) and meet the standards determined by four-year transfer partners program, the [MTA](#) requirements, industry expectations, and outside program accrediting agencies. The Curriculum Policy defines general education requirements for each degree type, aligned through the MTA. For example, associate of arts degrees require 30 credit hours of MTA-defined general education courses and associate of applied arts and sciences degrees require 15 credit hours of MTA-defined general education courses. GRCC's certificate programs do not require general education courses.

The Curriculum Policy states that GRCC awards the following credit-based credentials and degrees:

Certificate

Advanced Certificate

Associate of Arts (A.A.)

Associate of Applied Arts and Sciences (A.A.A.S.)

Associate of Business (A.B.)

Associate of Nursing (A.N.)

Associate of Fine Arts (A.F.A.)

Associate of Music (A.M.)

Associate of General Studies (A.G.S.)

GRCC academic programs meet specific purposes and efficiently guide students to their educational goals. For example, by focusing on an area of interest, Academic Pathway concentrations, which are A.A. programs, help students decide on academic and career goals and also help students interested in transferring to complete a bachelor's degree. [Certificate Programs](#) provide specific knowledge and skills necessary to enter a career, develop new skills, or continue employment. [Career Programs](#) (generally A.A.A.S. degrees) prepare students for a career that does not require a bachelor's degree. Several GRCC certificate programs are [laddered](#) with specific career associate's degrees, enabling students to apply certificate program credits toward an A.A.A.S., and, in some cases, articulate these to a bachelor's degree.

Program Assessment

Programs are maintained for quality and rigor through cyclic processes of the [Curriculum Development Process](#), the [Academic Program Review \(APR\)](#) process, and [updates to the College Catalog](#).

The Curriculum Policy is reviewed by the Academic Governing Council (AGC) on a three-year cycle. An ad-hoc team of the AGC works with the CAT to review the policy to identify needed changes. Using benchmarked policies at peer institutions, this team investigates potential changes at the state

level (MTA requirements) or accrediting bodies, reviews language for clarity, and recommends revisions to the AGC.

All GRCC academic programs undergo APR every five years to ensure that curricula are aligned for career readiness or transfer. The process is specific to the program type:

[Review of Career and Professional Programs](#) includes collecting environmental scanning data, reviewing key performance indicators, identifying external standards, revising program goals and program learning outcomes as needed, mapping curriculum to external standards such as accrediting bodies or employer needs, and developing a five-year learning outcomes assessment plan.

[Review of Transfer Programs](#) includes reviewing environmental scanning data and key performance indicators, comparing GRCC's program requirements to multiple four-year transfer institution programs, and reviewing transferability of program courses. If the program is an Articulated Program, the agreement with the transfer institution is updated, reviewed, and signed.

[Review of Pathway Concentration Programs](#), A.A. programs, includes reviewing key performance indicators and an analysis to determine if program requirements are meeting the needs of students seeking an introduction to an academic area and students' ability to move seamlessly to a career and professional program.

At the end of an APR review, course changes are reported and approved by department heads/program directors, school deans, and other stakeholders through the curriculum development process. While APR operates on a five-year cycle, programs can be reviewed and/or revised out of cycle if needed, including through an expedited review process if the College becomes aware of changes needed due to regulatory, accreditation, or business and industry concerns.

The College Catalog is maintained online and is updated each March for the fall semester of the next academic year based on revisions identified through APR the previous year. Updates and program additions can also occur for the winter semester.

Student Learning Outcomes

GRCC articulates learning goals through Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), and General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs). [Student learning](#) is assessed at all stages in the educational process, ensuring consistent collection, analysis, and integration of learning outcome measures.

CLOs are first documented in the [New Course Development process](#) and then reviewed and revised on a five-year cycle in the [Course Review and Revision Process](#). These measurable outcomes are developed by faculty and represent the concepts, skills, and theories that are key to mastering the course material.

To ensure ongoing evaluation, assessment is embedded in the [Faculty Performance Evaluation](#) (FPE) process. As part of the annual review process, faculty develop [an assessment plan](#), which is then approved and reviewed by their department head or program director and associate dean. GRCC has encouraged faculty use of the [AACU Value Rubrics](#) in developing assessment plans to align to best practices in student learning outcomes assessment.

PLOs are embedded in each of the Career and Professional and Certificate Programs and are articulated and specific to those programs. PLOs are developed and revised by faculty as part of the [Program Development](#) and [APR processes](#), respectively, and are based on a review of industry standards, advisory board input, and accreditation body requirements, among others. These processes include developing a five-year learning outcomes assessment plan of student achievement, approved by the School Dean. The results are reported in the annual FPE and in annual department reports.

A minimum of two [GELOs](#) are embedded in all general education courses, and faculty teaching these courses assess and report student achievement data as part of their annual FPE. The GELOs, which can be contextualized to address specific course requirements, are defined in seven categories:

1. Civic Engagement
2. Communication
3. Critical Thinking
4. Cultural Competence
5. Information Literacy
6. Intellectual Curiosity
7. Problem-Solving

GRCC policies, [Graduation Requirements](#) (7.20) and the [Curriculum Policy](#) (7.18), require all students to take general education courses to earn an associate degree, although the number of credits varies based on the specific degree awarded. The assessment of GELOs serves as the primary cross-college measure of learning for students earning A.A. degrees.

Consistent Learning Outcomes

GRCC's courses and programs, wherever and however delivered, follow consistent course descriptions, CLOs, PLOs, and GELOs. GRCC offers courses and programming at multiple locations. Course delivery modalities include in-person, online, hybrid, virtual, and in-person/virtual. Through College processes that ensure hiring highly qualified classroom faculty and supporting them with training and professional development, GRCC maintains quality programming regardless of location, student status (including concurrent/dual enrolled and Early/Middle College students), or course delivery method.

The Course Development, Review, and Revision process, the starting point for course development and review, defines course components, including course description and outline, CLOs, instructional strategies, and mandatory course components, such as appropriate assessments and classroom activities. These documents are held in the [GRCC Curriculum Database](#), which is publicly available and accessible to all faculty. To ensure consistency across all locations and modalities, faculty are expected to use these documents to inform the design and management of their courses.

To ensure high quality of instruction in distance education modalities, faculty teaching these courses are required to complete the [Online and Hybrid Certification Course](#) (OHCC), facilitated by the [Teaching, Learning, and Distance Education](#) (TLDE) department. The OHCC covers topics in course design including accessibility, learning outcomes, and assessment. GRCC courses must be approved for online/hybrid delivery and, prior to approval, are developed and reviewed against the [Quality Matters](#) rubric as defined in [GRCC Policy 7.2](#) (Distance Learning Standards). The online/hybrid course review committee includes two faculty members and one instructional designer with final approval by the executive director of TLDE.

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Argument

GE Program Philosophy and Structure

GRCC's [Vision and Mission](#) stress the College's goal to provide relevant educational opportunities to all individuals, inspiring them to meet economic, social, and environmental challenges to become active participants in shaping the world of the future.

GRCC's educational philosophy is based on the belief that all students must be prepared in broad skills that both transfer to any profession or career and also facilitate life-long learning. This learning begins in the context of GRCC's [General Education \(GE\) Program](#), which has the following philosophy:

General Education at GRCC is comprised of two goals. The first is to expand and deepen our students' understanding of the intellectual traditions that constitute the liberal arts and sciences. To that end, General Education courses at GRCC combine content knowledge with broadly applicable academic skills such as critical thinking and communication. The second is to provide students with a set of courses that help meet their educational and career goals. In keeping with this goal, GRCC recognizes the Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA) and includes General Education coursework in its transfer and workforce associate degree programs. General Education at GRCC builds knowledge, skills, and attitudes that every college-educated person should possess.

To support this philosophy, the College's GE program promotes the acquisition of knowledge, competencies, and abilities necessary to be an engaged and informed citizen; presents a range of ideas common in higher education; and encourages competencies necessary for full engagement in the workforce. These competencies and skills have been purposefully woven throughout the program

requirements. As noted, all associate degree programs require general education course completion as defined in the [Curriculum Policy 7.18](#).

There are currently 144 courses on the [GE course list](#), giving students many options to fulfill these requirements, engage their interests, and develop transferable skills that will support them in future academic and career applications. To be designated as a GE course, courses go through a rigorous approval process as part of the APR process. The [General Education Review Team](#) (GERT) reviews courses to ensure that they provide a survey, overview, or introduction to a particular discipline or broad topic that is generally accessible to a non-major. The team reviews courses for adherence to [MTA guidelines](#) and looks at transferability to GRCC's major four-year transfer institutions. GE courses must include and assess at least two [GELOs](#) linked to the [GE distribution area](#) based on the course content. The five GRCC GE distribution areas are as follows:

1. English Composition & Communication
2. Humanities
3. Social Science
4. Natural Science
5. Mathematics

Recognizing Human and Cultural Diversity

[GRCC's Values](#), especially Diversity, Respect, and Integrity, reinforce the importance of maintaining an environment of inclusion and an educational mission grounded in lifelong practices of inclusion and respect. These values are reflected in the GE Program's GELOs, which include civic engagement, cultural competence, and intellectual curiosity.

Learning about the human and cultural diversity of the world is also embedded through the [Humanities and Social Science distribution areas](#) of the GE Program, focusing on human and cultural diversity and how this diversity influences identity and human behavior. Reinforcing these learning outcomes across the curriculum is the goal not only of the GE program, but also of all educational activities at the College.

In addition to coursework and GELOs reinforced by the GE program, GRCC students learn more about human and cultural diversity and develop skills to live and work in a multicultural world through classroom experiences and extracurricular activities. Students have co- and extra-curricular growth opportunities through programming offered through the [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) (ODEI), which leads institutional objectives to move forward justice, access, and inclusion. The ODEI offers programming throughout the year and the [Diversity Lecture Series](#) is a well-attended series that promotes a better understanding of the multicultural world. Academic departments also provide growth opportunities through extracurricular activities, including the [Psychology Lecture Series](#). The [Student Life and Conduct Office](#) values and promotes student engagement opportunities, including the [Campus Activities Board](#) (CAB), [Student Government](#), and a wide selection of [Student Organizations](#).

Faculty have opportunities for training through the [TLDE](#) office and the ODEI so that they can best support student growth and enhance their own development. ODEI's three-tier [cultural competency curriculum](#) provides best practices in advancing equity including effective teaching methods, support services, and student engagement.

In addition, GRCC's [small class sizes](#) (averaging 22.3 students per class based on Fall 2021, 2022, and 2023) allow educational opportunities for the diverse student body to work together on classroom assignments, conduct experimental work, participate in performance opportunities, and complete and present team-based projects. Working together to solve problems, develop ideas, and learn about classmates with different backgrounds and experiences effectively provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to thrive in a multicultural world.

Contributions to Scholarship, Creative Work, and Discovery of Knowledge

GRCC faculty and students are supported in their efforts to contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge. Students have a wide range of opportunities to apply their learning in educational and creative endeavors, including the following examples:

Participating in research through involvement in [TRIO](#) programs through the [Summer Research HUB](#), such as Michigan College/University Partnership (MICUP) scholars program at Michigan Tech, the University of Michigan Community College Summer Fellowship Program, or a study abroad trip to the Netherlands sponsored by the Council for Opportunity and Education

Showcasing [artwork](#) in community and in the [Collins Art Gallery](#)

Performing in the Spectrum theater as part of the [GRCC Players](#)
[Performing music](#) through ensemble, band, and orchestra concerts

Competing in the [Engage Writing Contest](#) through the English Department

Publishing creative work in the [Display](#) magazine

[Building Habitat for Humanity homes](#) through GRCC's Workforce Training Programs

Competing in the [MWEST Challenge](#), where Business students pitch start-up ideas

Participating in the Honors Program and [Honors Projects](#), as well as capstone course research projects, where students work with classroom faculty to develop leadership, service, research, and creative scholarship skills as part of their coursework.

GRCC provides faculty with professional development opportunities and research support to enhance knowledge and contribute both to their professional fields and to their teaching and learning. Some examples include exhibiting artwork in the Collins Art Gallery, participating in the [English Department Spring Readings](#), and producing [professional publications](#). Faculty support for these endeavors takes various forms:

[Contractual Professional Development Funds](#) (Faculty Contract 2022-25). Each faculty member is awarded \$2,250 over the life of the contract for professional development, including conference attendance, publications, memberships in professional societies, support for research activities, etc.

[Instructional Improvement and Professional Development \(IIPD\)](#). The IIPD program has provided faculty grants for over 30 years and is managed by the Grants Department. Grants support faculty professional development to develop new avenues of instruction and curriculum and enhance teaching for increased student learning, achievement, and success.

[ImpACT Grant](#). The ImpACT grant initiative is a collaborative effort between ODEI, Instructional Support and Institutional Planning (ISIP), TLDE, and the Provost's Office. These grants support faculty initiatives developed to influence and impact equity and inclusion practices at GRCC.

Innovation Grants. The purpose of the Innovation Grants is to support faculty as they implement and showcase innovative High-Impact Educational Practices that lead to increased student success. Grant recipients showcase their project results during an annual TLDE event.

Sabbatical Leave. Faculty can apply for competitive sabbatical leave for a full academic year or for a semester. Faculty use the leaves for professional development and enrichment, including laboratory research, technology skill development, research supporting book/publications, and doctoral research.

Tuition Reimbursement. GRCC supports formal education for full-time faculty members with tuition reimbursement.

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3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

Argument

Diverse Faculty and Staff

GRCC's Human Resources (HR) practices [equitable hiring practices](#) with the goal of ensuring that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects the community served by the College. One of these practices is for all hiring committee members to complete training to avoid unintentional bias. Since 2021, GRCC has practiced an evidence-based selection hiring process for all staff positions. This process, based on a grant through HireReach, involves a structured, data-driven approach to better define and identify competencies related to job performance, provides reliable tools to measure them, and offers a standardized, consistent process proven to increase the quality of hires. Two early results are (1) a slight increase in hiring new employees who identify as minorities, and (2) an increase in internal promotions for minority employees.

While these efforts continue to enhance the diversity of its faculty and staff, GRCC's faculty and staff profile reflects a similar demographic to the area it serves. As reported in the [Fall 2023 Weekly Enrollment Report](#) 55% of GRCC students were female, 44% male, with 1% unreported; in addition, 41% identified as part of a minority group. In comparison, [Fast Facts 2023](#) reports that, in 2021, 53% of faculty and staff were female with 22% of employees identifying as part of a minority group.

Adequate and Appropriate Faculty Staffing

As reported in Fast Facts 2023, in fall 2021, GRCC employed 244 full-time faculty, which represented 37.2% of the College's workforce. Beyond teaching responsibilities, full-time faculty job responsibilities include curriculum oversight, setting expectations for student performance, conducting assessment of student learning, participating in college and student service, and staying current in their discipline through professional development. Full-time faculty have contractual baseload requirements of 15 contact hours of classroom time per week and support students during office hours for five hours per week during the fall and winter semesters. All classes are capped at a specific number of students based on delivery mode, safety and room size requirements, and equipment limitations. The [average class size](#) for lecture sections in fall 2023 was 24.7 students, but classes are capped at no more than 36 students, with the [Faculty Contract](#) specifying course caps for distance and hybrid learning classes at 26 students. The required contact and office hours and small class sizes allow faculty to participate fully in the activities that are part of the FPE process.

Faculty Credentials and Qualifications

GRCC confirms [credentials of all classroom faculty](#), including those teaching dual credit, contractual, and consortial offerings. Full-time faculty position requirements meet HLC standards of a master's degree in the area or closely related area in which the faculty member will teach. Many of GRCC's full-time and adjunct faculty exceed the minimum with a terminal degree in their area of expertise.

[Human Resources \(HR\)](#) validates all credentials during the application and hiring processes, ensuring degrees are from accredited institutions and that transcripts provide evidence of required coursework and earned degrees. Additional certification, licensure, and work experience required by many of GRCC's career, professional, and technical programs for program accreditation or grant funds are also validated by the institution.

As faculty earn additional credentials, these are confirmed by HR and are reflected in appropriate salary adjustment ([Faculty Contract, article 7.G](#): Changes in Salary).

Faculty Performance Evaluation

The [Faculty Performance Evaluation](#) (FPE) system at Grand Rapids Community College is intended as a collegial process. The FPE system, defined by the [Faculty Contract \(article 17\)](#), includes multiple measures of assessment designed to provide faculty with the essential information they need to achieve excellence in the teaching and mentoring of learners.

GRCC full-time faculty — including classroom faculty, tutorial coordinators, academic advisors, counselors, job training faculty, and librarians — are evaluated annually following established policies and procedures. The process defines faculty step progression through faculty ranks and is used to award tenure. While the process and requirement specifics depend on the individual faculty member's rank and tenure status, full-time faculty participate in classroom observations and evaluation, submit assessment of student learning projects, describe and document student and College service, report professional development activities, and provide a narrative on a [completed substantive project](#). Faculty plans, submitted for the evaluation process in September, are approved by department heads/program directors and associate deans. Final reports are submitted and approved near the end of the winter semester.

Adjunct faculty are evaluated through classroom observations that occur during the first semester hired and then every three years after that. Students have the opportunity to evaluate all classroom faculty via an online reporting system. These reports are shared with the faculty member being evaluated, the department head or program director and associate dean.

Faculty Professional Development

Professional development to remain current in academic disciplines and adept in teaching practices is an important part of GRCC's culture. In addition to the FPE process that includes both classroom observation and student evaluation, faculty are required by contract to complete a minimum of nine hours of professional development activities each calendar year (Faculty Contract, article 17).

The [ISIP](#) division, the center of institutional support for professional development, guides the development of cross-college faculty, staff, and student support processes and initiatives. ISIP includes several offices that support teaching and faculty improvement, including Curriculum Support; Experiential Learning; Institutional Research; and TLDE. [TLDE](#) provides extensive faculty professional development and support. TLDE offers services that include facilitated workshops and learning opportunities, Learning Day for faculty and staff, and annual events such as Great Teachers Seminar and New Faculty Institute.

All faculty, including adjunct faculty, have access to [professional development funds](#) as defined by the contract that allow for conference attendance, the purchase of materials, and professional society memberships, among other options. The use of these funds is approved by the faculty member's associate dean. Faculty can also apply for funds to support professional development through the [Instructional Improvement and Professional Development \(IIPD\) Program](#).

Faculty, like all full-time GRCC employees, are eligible for [tuition waiver](#) for GRCC courses and tuition reimbursement at other institutions.

Faculty Availability for Students

Full-time GRCC classroom faculty are contractually obligated to make themselves available to consult with students for a minimum of five hours per week beyond their normal teaching load during the fall and winter semesters using modalities and times that provide accessibility to their students ([Faculty Contract 2022-25, Article 6.F.1](#)). Faculty contact information and office hour times and modality are communicated to students in the course syllabus as required by contract and in the [Common Syllabus Components Policy \(7.16\)](#).

Qualified Student Support Staff

The Human Resources Office seeks to build a workforce to support the work of GRCC by hiring the most qualified candidates. GRCC uses an [evidence-based selection process](#) for hiring staff positions that adds objective data-driven decisions to help mitigate unintentional bias by reducing the variation in conclusions generally associated with human judgment. As a result, GRCC staff members providing student support services, financial aid advising, and cocurricular activities are qualified for their positions through minimum degree and experience requirements and supported in their

professional development through required hours (20 annually).

Meet and Confer employees complete the annual [Meet and Confer Performance Evaluation and Merit Compensation System](#) requirements. In this process, employees are required to set goals for employee development, which improve individual skills and professional development, which improves College and student outcomes. For members of the employee group, [Alliance of Professional Support Staff \(APSS\)](#), the [APSS performance evaluation](#) is used to assess the employee's performance and allow supervisors to set expectations on annual projects and goals, professional development and job knowledge, and professional skills for the upcoming year.

To develop and support staff, HR coordinates a wide variety of [staff professional development](#) opportunities that promote employee enrichment and enhance work-group effectiveness. Conference attendance for staff is encouraged and supported with College funds. HR also regularly collaborates with TLDE for development opportunities to support students across all employee groups. In addition, Support Staff Professional Development (SSPD) grants through the GRCC Foundation are available and staff are encouraged to apply.

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Argument

Appropriate Student Support Services

GRCC's faculty, staff, and administration understand that supporting students is critical to meeting the College's Mission. GRCC provides students with a wide range of support services that are intended to meet both academic and non-academic needs. These services include:

Admissions and Student Services. The Admissions and Student Services staff help students begin their journey at GRCC. Students receive assistance with admissions applications, transcript submission, getting a Raider card, and setting up Online Center and GRCC wireless access, registering for placement testing, and learning more about the programs and courses available to them at GRCC.

Student Records/Registrar's Office. The Student Records/Registrar's Office facilitates student support services related to academic records, including managing prerequisite waivers for transfer students, assisting students with the [academic forgiveness](#) process, sending official transcripts to transfer institutions, and conducting graduation audits.

Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid Office informs students about federal, state, and institutional financial aid options and offers support as they complete application processes. Students can schedule one-on-one appointments with financial aid specialists.

Veterans Success Center. The Center provides specialized support to military and veteran students, including one-on-one advising, VA work study programs, educational benefit enrollment and certification, and referrals to campus and community resources.

Academic Support and Tutoring Services. GRCC offers academic support through nine discipline-specific tutorial labs. Drop-in and virtual appointments assist students with Mechanical and Architectural Design and Computer-aided Design, Mathematics; Language Arts, Health Sciences, Physical Sciences, Biology, Business and Economics, and Computer Information Systems courses. Technology labs also provide assistance with technology access and user platforms, including the

LMS (Blackboard) and email.

Get Help. Get Help services are coordinated by Student Life and Conduct and focus on reducing students' basic needs barriers. Students can find support for a wide range of needs, including emergency funding, food, and housing; legal aid; and domestic and sexual violence.

GRCC Cares Network. The GRCC Cares Network, managed by Student Success, operates as an early alert system and provides one-stop student support services. Faculty and staff can refer students to the network for assistance with academic concerns, hardships, and basic needs. Students can also self-refer through Navigate's Handraise feature.

Mental Health and Wellness Services. GRCC provides extensive mental health services and referrals, including personal counseling, emergency services, and self-help services. GRCC's **Behavioral Intervention Team**, designed to detect early indicators of potential disruptive conduct, self-harm, and the risk of violence to others, supports these efforts. The team receives and assesses information, takes action when necessary, and tracks details about behavior concerns noted on campus.

Physical Health Programming and Facilities. GRCC recognizes the importance of physical health to academic success and provides students with access to wellness and exercise science courses, athletic facilities, and fitness center.

Lakeshore Campus. In 2021, GRCC expanded its academic and student support services in the Holland area on the Lakeshore Campus. In addition to academic course offerings, students have access to support services, including academic advising, enrollment services, disability support services, and financial aid support.

Collaborations and College Preparation

In addition to these student support services, GRCC also supports student learning through community partnerships and programming designed to assist the community and prepare students for higher education.

TRIO Educational Opportunity Center. This program provides support for eligible future college students, guiding them through academic, career, and financial aid counseling and a path to secondary education and in-demand skills that will lead to a rewarding career.

English as a Second Language (ESL). GRCC's Adult Education department offers ESL classes at neighborhood sites and in virtual formats, tutoring and career coaching and resources, and opportunities to complete the National Career Readiness Certificate to students who are 20 years or older.

High School Partnerships. GRCC offers Dual/Concurrent Enrollment and Early/Middle College so that area high school students can get a head start on their college coursework. Dual and concurrent enrollment allows high school students to take college courses, earning college credit and experiencing the rigors of college level coursework. Early/Middle College is an application-based 13th year experience giving high school students an opportunity to earn a high school diploma and up to 60 transferable credits and/or an associate degree or technical certificate.

Gear Up Wyoming. GRCC is a partner in this early awareness program that was funded in 2018 for

7th grade students in four Wyoming school districts. Students in the program receive individualized academic support with a goal of preparing them for post-secondary education.

[Bridges to College – Raider Ready program](#). This program is a free seven-week in person summer program designed to help graduating high school seniors prepare for college. The program is open to recent high school graduates from Kent and Ottawa Counties and enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. Goals of the program include improving reading, writing, and math skills and building a sense of belonging at GRCC.

Academic Placement

GRCC's transfer and career programs are organized by [Academic Pathway \(AP\)](#) based on curricular alignment. In addition, each of the 12 APs has an aligned pathway concentration program (A.A.) that serves to support students who have not decided on a specific academic program. As part of the application process, students select an academic program, and those who do not wish to select a specific transfer or career program are placed into the pathway concentration program that best aligns with their interests. Students can learn about the different APs on the College's website and at Open House Events.

The GRCC [College Catalog](#) serves as a [guide](#) for students. Classes are listed by Priority, and [Priority I courses](#) should be taken first. Priority I courses are based on nationally recognized early momentum metrics and typically include English Composition I, a math course, and a course that introduces the Pathways discipline.

GRCC provides courses that prepare students for college-level courses, improve English language skills, develop skills needed for college success, and has aligned college-level courses with preparatory courses. [Placement testing](#) procedures and requirements are defined for new students, those with older ACT/SAT test scores, and low college GPA. Placement into preparatory courses is in part determined by the [Admission and Placement Policy \(8.2\)](#). Based on the student's academic background, placement testing is available and required for Math, English, and English as a Second Language (ESL).

GRCC's first year experience course, [PY100, Strategies for College and Life Success](#), designed to help students become active learners through self-assessment, self-exploration, skill development, and awareness of the college environment, is available as an elective and is required for new students whose placement scores indicate a need for additional support.

[Student Orientation](#) is an important part of the new student experience at GRCC and is required for all new degree-seeking students by the [Mandatory Student Orientation policy \(8.28\)](#). Orientation sessions are offered in person at both the Lakeshore and Main campuses and in hyflex, virtual, or asynchronous online options. Attendees learn about GRCC and register for classes based on recommendations from their academic advisor. These recommendations are based on placement scores and the Academic Pathway or program chosen by the student.

Academic Advising and Counseling

GRCC provides a range of [academic advising](#) opportunities for students who wish to identify their academic and career goals, enroll in the correct classes for their chosen program, and learn about

transfer institution requirements. All students who have a declared major are assigned an advisor through the appropriate program or department. [Students who qualify](#) for Disability Support Services, Occupational Support Services, and TRIO are assigned an advisor through those programs. Students can make appointments with their advisor through Navigate or through their MyGRCC account. Students can meet virtually or in person at either the Main or Lakeshore campuses.

[Student Success Coaches](#) are also available to meet the needs of specific student populations, such as the students in the [Challenge Scholars Program](#). Success Coaches offer additional support to students as they navigate academic options and move through their educational journey by providing interventions and outreach.

[Career counseling](#) is also offered at GRCC. All students who are unsure of their career path are encouraged to use the FOCUS2 assessment to gain insight into how their skills and interests align with specific careers and to use O*NET to learn more about compensation and educational requirements for careers of interest. FOCUS2 and O*NET are promoted in the College Catalog, at Raider Rally and Open House Events, and on the College's website. One-on-one appointments with career counselors are available to students who need additional help.

In addition, [faculty and academic departments](#) provide academic advising as part of their annual department plan, as outlined in the GRCC Faculty Contract. These events and activities include single and multi-department table/virtual events, advising luncheons, and semester long Café Series held in the tutorial labs. GRCC also hosts transfer institution representatives on campus as well as [Transfer Fairs](#) where students can meet with representatives from transfer institutions and learn more about transfer requirements and opportunities.

Infrastructure Supporting Effective Teaching and Learning

GRCC seeks to provide the highest quality infrastructure and resources to support effective teaching and learning. Teaching and learning are central to the College's Mission, and it is the College's priority to ensure that faculty have the physical spaces, technological resources, and support services needed to carry out the work of providing the highest quality academic experience possible to students.

GRCC's [campus facilities and infrastructure](#) provide high-quality teaching and learning environments for students and faculty, according to the [Vision of the Learning Environment at GRCC](#), approved by AGC and led by the AGC Learning Environment Team (LET), including the following:

Many classrooms and laboratories across campus include computers equipped with [accessibility-related technology](#) and are also equipped with [HyFlex capabilities](#).

Classroom spaces are maintained with computer and internet access, projection systems, furniture that is easily moved to facilitate group discussions and learning and are sized to maintain classes of up to 36 students, facilitating faculty/student interaction.

Science laboratories are well equipped to deliver hands-on experiences to students. For example, students in the anatomy and physiology laboratories in the Biological Science Department learn by viewing and analyzing human cadavers and students in the organic chemistry labs work with advanced instrumentation including mass spectrometry and nuclear magnetic resonance.

Campus and on-site clinical practice spaces support GRCC's dental and nursing programs.

Dental assisting and hygiene students learn techniques and gain skills at GRCC's Dental Clinic. Clinical practice sites in healthcare facilities in the Grand Rapids area provide hands-on experience for GRCC's nursing programs.

Students in career programs such as welding and automotive technology are prepared for the workforce through high quality career technology laboratory facilities.

The Laboratory Preschool provides students with opportunities to be involved with children under the guidance of instructors in GRCC's early childhood program.

GRCC's music training, music performance, and art facilities provide environments for teaching and learning related to instrumental and vocal music, visual and creative arts.

GRCC's Secchia Institute for Culinary Education supports several academic programs including baking and pastry arts, craft brewing, culinary arts, personal chef, and pre-hospitality management.

The [LET](#) plays a crucial role in investigating new classroom technology and furnishing to ensure that students and faculty have adequate resources to maintain a positive learning experience. To maintain effective and safe laboratory conditions and learning environments, GRCC's [laboratory staff and faculty](#) ensure that the correct supplies are stocked, equipment is operational, and that the students have the resources needed to complete their laboratory work.

GRCC supports effective teaching and learning by providing technological resources for faculty and students. Technical support is provided by GRCC's Information Technology (IT) Customer Support area and support for teaching and learning by the TLDE department.

[IT](#) provides customer support, access to hardware, and Wi-Fi network access to students and faculty. Students have access to hotspots, laptop checkout vending, and open computer lab spaces in nearly every building on campus. Students can access IT support via phone or the [Student IT Resources](#) webpage. Faculty have similar resources available through the [Faculty IT Resources](#) web page, but have additional support through [Media Technologies](#), including classroom support like video captioning and equipment check out.

The [TLDE](#) department, in addition to providing faculty professional development and support for distance education, also supports GRCC's instructional technologies. TLDE offers technical support and training for Blackboard Learn with Ultra Base Navigation (a Blackboard product) and Respondus assessment tools. GRCC recently adopted the Ultra Base navigational system for its mobile-friendly interface designed to enhance student and faculty experiences and is undergoing a review of the LMS.

GRCC also supports teaching and learning through a wide variety of academic support services. These services include:

[Disability Support Services \(DSS\)](#). DSS supports access for all GRCC students who require accommodation in classroom or other campus environments based on medical issues, learning disabilities, physical or mental health concerns, and physical conditions that impact access to learning. Supports include adaptive equipment, assistive technology access and training, alternative textbook versions, and accommodated testing services.

[Library and Learning Commons](#). Along with 24/7 web-based academic resources available to students and faculty, the GRCC Library loans computers and other technology, maintains study spaces, manages textbook reserves, and maintains book, journal, and video collections.

[Academic Support and Tutoring Services](#). Tutoring services are available in a variety of delivery formats and serve students through subject-specific tutorial labs. Open computer labs

are also available for student use.

[Academic Testing Services](#). Testing services offer proctored testing for the College Level Examination Programs (CLEP), Challenge Exams, and Health Education Systems, Inc. (HESI) exams, among others, and supports the College's prior learning assessment (PLA) processes.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

GRCC's degree and certificate offerings meet community needs by providing meaningful academic experiences, aligning with industry standards, and preparing students for their academic or career journey. Academic program development and revision meet the standards outlined in the Curriculum Policy and follow the APR process. The curriculum is outcomes based and learning is defined by measurable student learning outcomes. The primary purpose of APR at GRCC is to systematically improve the educational service, program, curriculum, and teaching and learning by evaluating the program and student mastery of the Program Learning Outcomes and General Education Learning Outcomes.

Supporting GRCC's academic offerings, the ISIP division guides the APR and curriculum development processes and supports student learning assessment. Within ISIP, TLDE offers faculty professional development, support for online education, and training in educational technologies. TLDE supports classroom faculty, helping ensure a high quality and consistent curriculum meeting students' needs across all modes of delivery at all GRCC locations.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

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

Argument

Program Review Process

GRCC maintains a comprehensive [Academic Program Review](#) (APR - see [GRCC Acronym List](#)) process intended to systematically improve the educational service, program, curriculum, teaching, and learning of its academic programming. To achieve this purpose, the APR process was designed to evaluate the program or service and the students' learning of defined Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). Through the process, strengths and areas for improvement are identified, in order to determine current needs and plan for the future direction of the program. APR integrates internal evaluation needs, including formative program development and strategic planning for academic programs, with the requirements for external accrediting bodies. To ensure the sustained quality of academic programs and curriculum, each program completes APR [every five years](#).

The APR process, facilitated by the Instructional Support and Institutional Planning (ISIP) division, consists of two review processes: one for [transfer programs](#) and another for [career and professional programs](#). APR is a multi-step process that differs slightly based on the program category. APR for

transfer programs consists of five steps: Overview, Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Analysis, Curriculum Review/Articulation Agreement(s), Final Report, and Implementation. APR for Career and Professional Programs consists of six steps: Environmental Scanning/LMI, KPI Analysis, Curriculum Review, Assessment of Student Learning, Final Report, and Implementation.

APR leverages [KPIs](#) and demographic information for the program, including a five-year trend of the number of students in the program; number of first time in any college (FTIAC) students and transfers; percent by gender; percent part-time and full-time; and average age, to draw inferences about the student experience in the program and to support identified needs or actions. The KPIs are collected and compiled for the programs in the APR process by the Institutional Research (IR) office. The APR process involves faculty and administrators, including department heads or program directors and deans, as well as the full-time faculty members teaching in the program. When appropriate, the review team is extended to include adjunct faculty, non-teaching faculty, staff, curriculum support staff member(s), institutional research representative(s), and advisory board members.

Completed APR reports are reviewed by the appropriate academic dean. APR information is documented in the [Curriculog system](#), and finished reports and data generated by the APR process are stored in [GRCC's Google Drive](#).

Programs recently completing APR include Juvenile Services, Law Enforcement, Corrections, and Addiction Studies within [Criminal Justice](#) (School of Business and Industry), [Education](#) (School of Liberal Arts), [Exercise Science and Radiological Technology](#) (School of Health Sciences), and [Mechanical and Architectural Design](#) (School of STEM). These completed reviews support decisions on the efficacy and effectiveness of academic programs, identifying opportunities, gaps, or deficiencies and providing appropriate corrective measures. Examples of improvements that have been made to programs as a result of APR processes include identifying the need for another faculty position for Architectural Technology programs due to enrollment growth and the need for a new introductory class for Exercise Science programs due to changes in transfer partner curriculum.

Appropriate Credit Transcription

GRCC evaluates all credit that it transcribes, including course credits, transfer credits from other colleges and universities, credits awarded for experiential or prior learning, advanced placement and test credit, military credits, credits earned through industry-recognized credentials, and high school and technical center articulation.

Several College policies apply to and define the College's credit-awarding guidelines, including Grading (7.10), Transfer Course Credit (8.29), Minimum Institutional Credit (8.31), Prior Learning Assessment (7.15), and Industry Recognized Credentials (8.33). These policies define both policy and practice and adhere to HLC assumed practices for each category.

Faculty have authority over evaluation of learning in the classroom resulting in the awarding of [grades \(College Policy 7.10\)](#) and course credits. For students to maintain [academic standing](#), they must earn a minimum of a 2.0 cumulative GPA. Students in specific programs and those receiving financial aid and/or veterans' benefits also must meet specific academic requirements that determine continuation for these programs. The [Minimum Institutional Credit policy \(8.31\)](#) defines credit minimums for associate degrees (15 credits) and certificate programs (8 credits).

The [Transfer Course Credit policy \(8.29\)](#) defines three guidelines for acceptance of transfer credits for equivalent courses from any regionally accredited institution in the US, international institutions of higher education, and military branches: The student earned a grade of C (2.0 GPA) or higher in the course; the course credits were earned on the undergraduate level; and the transfer course is at least one credit hour.

According to the [Prior Learning Assessment policy \(7.15\)](#), credit may be awarded for non-traditional learning or work experiences if a student can demonstrate competency in designated Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) by submitting a portfolio which is evaluated by a GRCC subject matter expert. The following guidelines apply: no alternate test (such as AP or CLEP) exists; credits must be aligned with a course and are only awarded once for that course; general education courses are ineligible for PLA; and the credits are typically not transferable.

[Test credits](#) can be transferred from multiple sources including AP, CLEP, ACE, and International Baccalaureate (IB) program, as long as the testing agency and test providers are included in the Transfer Evaluation System (TES)/CollegeSource database. Foreign or international credits are accepted by GRCC once each course has been evaluated by one of two NACES-accredited credential evaluators: World Education Services, and Educational Credential Evaluators. Military credits from government sources, including DANTES and the Military Training and Evaluations Program for the Joint Services Transcript (JST), are evaluated based on the credit equivalency recommendations and outcomes provided on the JST or from Credential Solutions for military credit from the Air Force. If direct equivalents are not determined, students may receive elective credit to apply toward electives in their program.

GRCC provides students the opportunity to earn college credit through [challenge examinations](#) by testing out of designated courses. While the credits are not transferable, they allow students who achieve the minimum score on tests designed by College faculty to earn course credits.

According to the [Industry-Recognized Credentials/Test Credit policy \(8.33\)](#), students can earn equivalent course credit for industry recognized credentials that have been established by the faculty and documented through the New Course Development and Course Review and Revision processes. A [list of Industry recognized credentials](#) is maintained in the Student Records/Registrar's Office and posted on the Transfer Credit webpage, along with application instructions.

Ensuring Transfer Credit Quality

Using appropriate policies and procedures linked to each type of transfer credit, GRCC ensures the quality of the credits accepted in transfer. GRCC accepts credits only from accredited national and international organizations and through established agreements.

Transfer credit evaluations are completed by the [Student Records Office's](#) credit evaluator. Equivalence is established through review of the GRCC course description, course level, and outcomes as compared with documentation provided for the transfer course, industry recognized credential, or test. In order for course-to-course equivalency to be established, similar rigor, such as common credit/contact hours and the expectation for similar prior knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes, must be established. GRCC maintains databases with prior credit evaluations to support seamless credit transfer for students. Information on [how to transfer credit](#) is available to students on GRCC's website. Academic department heads and program directors have the final authority on transfer credit equivalency.

GRCC considers college level [courses for transfer](#) if students received a C grade or higher in those courses from accredited colleges and universities. GRCC will also consider courses taken at institutions accredited by specialized agencies or at institutions outside the United States. Grades from transfer courses are not included in the student's grade point average.

The [Michigan Transfer Agreement \(MTA\)](#) provides transferability of up to 30 semester credits to meet many of the general education requirements at participating Michigan four-year colleges and universities. Students may complete the requirements as part of the Associate of Arts degrees at GRCC or as a stand-alone endorsement.

Transfer of credits from GRCC is facilitated through the [Academic Advising and Transfer Center](#) by faculty academic advisors who support students' program completion and transfer with the use of the MTA and articulation agreements. These agreements, facilitated by the Director of Transfer and Articulation Services in ISIP, reflect collaborative efforts to increase associate and bachelor's degree completion among transfer students from all backgrounds through collaboration among faculty and School Deans' Offices. In addition to GRCC's articulated transfer programs, GRCC has participated in statewide transfer initiatives. These efforts resulted in the [MiTransfer Pathways](#), consisting of multi-institutional associate to bachelor's degree transfer pathways starting in 2018. MiTransfer Pathways include Art, Biology, Business, Communication, Criminal Justice, Exercise Science, Mechanical Engineering, Psychology, Public Health, and Social Work, and four [MiWorkforce Pathways](#) in Applied Business, General Applied Sciences, Healthcare, and Information Technology. GRCC maintains and references [additional transfer guides](#) to support students' transfer to institutions beyond those with which the College maintains [formal articulation agreements or offers articulated programs](#).

Authority over Curriculum and Learning Expectations

GRCC exercises authority over its curriculum including rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for programs, including dual enrollment opportunities, through the [Academic Governing Council \(AGC\)](#). AGC, a collaborative initiative between faculty and academic administration, mediates issues that impact students, faculty, and staff related to curriculum, teaching and learning policies, student concerns, and faculty concerns. [Recent decisions](#) include updates to the Curriculum Policy, Dual Enrollment, and the Student Code of Conduct. AGC recommendations are, upon approval by the Provost, implemented on a college-wide basis.

The AGC committee responsible for oversight of the College's curriculum is the [Curriculum Approval Team \(CAT\)](#). Guided by the GRCC [Curriculum Policy \(7.18\)](#), which establishes guidelines and standards for GRCC degrees and programs, the CAT reviews and makes decisions concerning curriculum development at GRCC. The ISIP division facilitates the College's curriculum, assessment, and accreditation work. In addition to the CAT, ISIP sponsors and facilitates the work of the following College teams: Professional Development Faculty Advisory Council, Distance Learning Faculty Advisory Board, General Education Review Team, Honors Program Leadership Team, Institutional Assessment Team, and Institutional Review Board. These coordinated teams and efforts ensure a unified approach to curriculum development, assessment, and programming.

New course development at GRCC is based on a common [course outline format](#), which clearly articulates expectations for student learning and student learning outcomes. In addition, [course](#)

[syllabi](#) contain common elements, as defined by AGC, including the official course description, student learning outcomes, grading policies and procedures, and assignment descriptions.

GRCC's expectations for student learning are outlined through [academic standing information](#) provided and maintained by the Student Records Office, in accordance with the Academic Standing Policy (8.17). Credit students are required to maintain good academic standing. Academic standing is reviewed at the end of each semester of enrollment when grades are posted. Students in specific programs and students receiving financial aid and/or veterans benefits must also meet the specific academic requirements that determine continuation for these programs. If students achieve a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0, students will be in good standing and this will be noted on the student's transcript. Students are also required to make satisfactory academic progress in accordance with federal financial aid guidelines.

GRCC [ensures faculty credentials](#) and their qualifications to teach all programs, including dual enrollment programs. Faculty collaborate with their School Deans' offices through their department head or program director to determine qualifications for posting faculty positions. The administration ensures that they are in keeping with HLC expectations, as well as other professional accreditation expectations. Instructors who teach in GRCC's dual enrollment and contractual programs are all hired by the College and must meet the College's hiring standards. All courses taught to dual-enrolled high school students are GRCC courses offered and taught by GRCC faculty; all courses offered at local high schools are the same as those offered on GRCC campuses. Faculty who teach GRCC courses at high school sites are [evaluated in the same manner](#) as other GRCC faculty members.

All GRCC courses are required to use the same course curriculum and assessments and meet the same student learning outcomes, regardless of the location in which they are taught. GRCC [programs for high school students](#) are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement as the higher education curriculum. High school students enrolled in GRCC courses are subject to the same GRCC student conduct and academic policies as all students, including Academic Standing, Academic Probation, and Academic Suspension. All new high school students complete an orientation, and all concurrent and Early/Middle college students receive, and acknowledge receipt of, GRCC's Concurrent/Middle College Student Handbook.

Access to Learning Resources

GRCC provides student access to learning resources through its bookstore, library, labs, and tutorial resources. GRCC's [Library and Learning Commons](#) provides in-person and virtual reference service, provided by faculty librarians. The library provides access to print and online books, thousands of online journals, and textbook reserves. It also serves as a meeting point on campus with study space, computers, printers, and the laptop loan program. Web-based resources are available 24/7 through the Library's [Off-campus Resource](#) portal.

[Academic Support and Tutoring Services](#) (ASTS) offers a variety of support services to all students in multiple formats. [Subject-specific labs](#) are led by faculty tutorial coordinators with subject-specific degree credentials and staffed by professional and peer tutors. GRCC's tutorial training program is certified by the International Tutor Training program through the College Reading and Learning Association. Tutorial labs offer students both drop-in and online services and includes Biology, Business & Economics, Calculus & Physical Sciences, Health Sciences, Language Arts,

Mathematics, Math Prep and Learning, and Mechanical and Architectural Design/Computer-aided Design (CAD). Nine drop-in computer labs also provide active learning space, tutoring support, and software and computer access.

Lastly, GRCC contracts with Barnes and Noble to manage its [bookstore](#). The [Bookstore Liaison Team](#) ensures that appropriate learning resources are available to students through the bookstore's Course Materials Concierge and oversees and monitors the resources provided by outside vendors.

Accreditation for Educational Programming

Currently GRCC holds several [program accreditations](#), including Nursing and Licensed Practical Nursing, Automotive Technology, Child Development, Culinary Arts, and others. Local and regional industry is the driving force behind program accreditation. GRCC seeks to prepare students for industry needs through accredited programs and programs designed to prepare students for professional licensure, certification, or endorsements within the state of Michigan. Programs work with local industry and licensure agencies to ensure appropriate and relevant learning outcomes and experiences are included. Where accreditation is available, programs are encouraged to seek accreditation to maintain viability, rigor, and quality within their fields.

Evaluating Graduate Success

GRCC evaluates the success of its graduates, ensuring the degree and certificate programs that it presents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution applies appropriate indicators, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs. This evaluation process begins with the [Academic Program Review \(APR\) process](#), which uses these measures to ensure program currency and quality.

GRCC's accredited programs evaluate graduate success to ensure the credentials offered are accomplishing their intended purpose. Programs including Medical Assisting, Certified Nursing Assistant, Corrections, Police Academy, and Dental Assisting are required to include [licensure pass rates](#) and career progress information as part of their accreditation standards.

As part of its Perkins Grant reporting process, GRCC also conducts an annual [survey of alumni](#) to determine student success in finding employment in an occupation related or unrelated to their program of study within one year after attending GRCC. [Additional data about GRCC graduates](#) are collected by GRCC's IR Office and are reported to the National Student Clearinghouse and the National Center for Education Statistics' Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The IR Office also [reports annual graduation and transfer out rates](#) based on gender and race/ethnicity.

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4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

Argument

Assessing Student Learning

GRCC assesses student learning in academic and co-curricular programs using direct and indirect measures to collect data and information, applying these data to drive formative curricular and instructional improvement. At GRCC, the cycle for [assessing student learning](#) includes (1) identifying the outcome, deciding how to measure, and selecting the assessment instrument; (2) collecting data; (3) analyzing data, drawing inferences, and deciding whether changes/improvements to the curriculum and/or teaching strategies are warranted to improve student learning; (4) making changes; (5) collecting data; (6) analyzing data, drawing inferences, and deciding whether the changes improved student learning; (7) repeating the process. This process is embedded in GRCC's culture of continuous improvement and occurs as General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs), Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), and co-curricular program outcomes are assessed. The goal of supporting, assessing, and improving student learning is shared and facilitated by several GRCC groups and teams, including ISIP, the Office of the Provost, Deans' Council, AGC, and the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT).

General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) Assessment

Foundational to the College assessment process are measures of student achievement through [GELOs](#). An outcome of the College's work in the [HLC Assessment Academy, 2017-21](#) was a [significantly revised GELOs assessment approach](#), combining 70 previous Institutional Learning Outcomes and GELOs into seven new GELOs. This revised approach also ensures that at least [one GELO](#) is identified and assessed in campus-wide assessment efforts.

Program-Level Assessment

As part of the five-year [Academic Program Review \(APR\)](#) cycle, the College assesses PLOs. GELOs assessment is supported by the work of the Institutional Assessment Team, and documented in faculty FPEs and academic department reports and plans.

GRCC's faculty-driven [Institutional Assessment Committee](#) meets monthly throughout the academic

year and is responsible for oversight of the assessment process, the quality, and the consistency of the assessment process. [Over the last two years](#), the committee has implemented an enhanced assessment process, reviewed quality improvements, sought feedback on the process from faculty, and revised the process.

The program-level assessment is defined during the [curriculum development process](#) with the identification of course content, course sequence, and student learning outcomes at each level. Faculty are responsible for developing and implementing the curriculum, aligned with the [GRCC Curriculum Policy \(7.18\)](#), and for ensuring its academic substance, currency, and relevancy for its internal and external constituencies. Faculty utilize the institutional processes of [Course Development, Review, and Revision](#) and [Program Development and Revision](#) to ensure the relevance and rigor of curricular offerings. Through these processes, faculty define the learning outcomes for students for both programs and courses and develop cohesive curricula that incorporate the GELOs and align with appropriate PLOs and CLOs.

In addition to the program-level assessment process facilitated through the APR process, several GRCC programs implement [technical and professional skill assessments](#), such as the Registered Dental Assistant Exam, the National Board Dental Hygiene Exam (NBDHE), and the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN). These assessments, completed once students have finished a program, assess program-level learning and readiness for professional careers.

Course-Level Assessment

Course-level assessment is driven by faculty and embedded in each faculty member's annual [Faculty Performance Evaluation \(FPE\)](#) plan. The FPE plan, which is reviewed by department heads or program directors and associate deans, includes a student learning assessment project that may be an individual, departmental, or college-wide assessment project focused on a CLO, PLO, or GELO. New faculty are introduced to GRCC's culture of continuous improvement during the [New Faculty Institute](#) where they learn how to identify or create assessment instruments to measure contextual learning in their classes, using a rubric created to guide this development. Assessment data is reported in the FPE as well as through the [GELOs Reporting Survey](#). Departmental-level learning outcomes assessment information is also reported each year in the [Academic Departments Annual Report](#).

Faculty members are responsible for the assessment of student learning in the classroom using a variety of strategies such as quizzes and tests, writing assignments, presentations and demonstrations, capstone projects, internships, group projects, and lab projects. These assessments are tied to course objectives, which are communicated to students in course syllabi. GRCC's ISIP division and the [Teaching, Learning, and Distance Education \(TLDE\)](#) department provide support for faculty to enhance the effectiveness of their teaching and learning assessment projects. [Recent programming](#) offered through TLDE has supported GRCC's commitment to closing equity gaps in student outcomes, including workshops on culturally responsive pedagogy, understanding disaggregated student success data, and applying the Intercultural Development Inventory.

Co-curricular Assessment

[Co-curricular assessment](#) is part of GRCC's focus on data-driven decision-making. Program faculty

and staff develop learning outcomes related to their programming and develop appropriate assessments to measure both the effectiveness of their services and student learning. The following programs have been participating in co-curricular program review and assessment since 2018, as a [result of a College Action Project \(CAP\)](#) in a previous GRCC Strategic Plan: Academic Support Services, Academic Support and Tutoring Services, Honors Program, Information Literacy, and Occupational Support Services. Assessment results are collected, analyzed, and summarized in the area's Annual Co-Curricular Assessment Findings & Action Plans. The [annual TLQM \(Teaching and Learning Quality Monitoring\) report](#) provides institutional documentation of these efforts.

Applying Assessment Data

The institution uses the information gained from assessment at all levels to improve student learning, analyzing and applying the data gained from a variety of institutional, department/program, and faculty assessment sources. The [GELOs assessment project](#) is one example of how data is used to improve student learning. Implementing information gained from the GELOs assessment project is evident at department, program, and classroom levels. Evidence of the College's application of assessment data to improve student learning is described in several documents and reports, including these:

[Department and Program Annual Reports](#), specifically, the section: Outcomes Assessment Data & Findings on Past Year's Projects

[Program Review Documents](#)

[Individual Faculty Assessment Reports](#)

GRCC's co-curricular and student support areas also apply assessment data to offerings and processes to improve student learning and development. Examples of these improvements include (1) improvements to the honors project requirement for completion of the [Honors Program; curricular changes](#) to the HNR101-Introduction to Honors course (changing to an accelerated seven-week offering and creating a common schedule of assignments for all sections of HNR 101); and opportunities for students to present their honors projects for their courses or capstone research at a showcase event (2) expanded on-line tutoring options and customized service hours of tutoring areas based on student needs/availability and changes to advising and tutoring in the [Academic Support and Tutoring Services](#) area; and (3) modifications to GRCC's [Information Literacy programming](#).

At the institutional level, the College is currently revising the [assessment process](#). In 2022-23, initial revision steps included adjustments to APR and using Curriculog to house the APR process. Current work includes investigating Curriculog as a possible data repository, providing a shared location for assessment data, and providing for additional opportunities for faculty to report and discuss assessment data beyond the FPE (utilizing the [GELOs form](#) by modifying it for use across the College for PLOs, for example, and reviewing more broadly). These revisions are being led by faculty and are driven by process assessments and continuous improvement efforts.

Assessment Processes Reflect Best Practices

GRCC is committed to continuous improvement, applying data collected through the assessment process and supported through other practices and processes to drive decision-making. GRCC's assessment processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect principles of good practice

for assessing student learning and applying effective assessment methods and tools, including participation of significant faculty, instructional staff, and other relevant staff members. Through its participation in the HLC Assessment Academy, the College has developed more effective and efficient assessment processes and practices, including revised learning outcomes for the General Education program and a more efficient APR process using Curriculog. Additionally, the College is working on a more efficient way to collect and document assessment efforts.

Foundational to the [College's Values](#) of Excellence, Innovation, and Accountability is a commitment to collecting, analyzing, and applying appropriate data to make sound decisions related to academic programming and student learning. GRCC's multi-faceted approach of [learning outcomes assessment](#), [faculty evaluation](#), [staff/administrator evaluation](#), and [Academic Program Review](#) is supported by institutional structures extending from academic departments and schools to the ISIP division and the [IR office](#).

These processes are also supported and reinforced through the Strategic Plan's Strategic Initiatives (previously called College Action Projects or CAPs), which often rely on institutional assessment and data collection efforts. For example, the recently completed [HLC Assessment Academy/CAP 1.2 project](#) for the restructure of General Education Outcomes assessment and [CAP 1.4.1](#) for Co-Curricular Program Review and assessment demonstrate the institution's ongoing commitment to effective and constructive assessment.

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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

Measuring Retention, Persistence, and Completion

GRCC has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious, attainable, and appropriate to the College's mission. [These benchmarks](#) are collected and [reported to the Board of Trustees](#) and reflect GRCC's mission, student population, and educational offerings. The rate of retention of students enrolling at GRCC is measured annually. IR also collects and reports [weekly enrollment data](#) covering a three-year time period, including unduplicated headcount compared to target enrollment, billing units, and credits attempted over time.

GRCC demonstrates a proactive commitment to improving retention and completion outcomes through various long-term planning initiatives. The College embeds these goals within its key planning frameworks: the Strategic Plan ([Strategic Goal 2: Completion and Transfer](#)), annual departmental plans, and specific initiatives such as the development of a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan.

For instance, the current Strategic Plan includes two objectives dedicated to enhancing data collection and reporting of completion data, particularly for historically underserved and underrepresented students. Additionally, GRCC's emerging [Strategic Enrollment Management \(SEM\) Plan](#) is designed to guide both short- and long-term student success strategies. Expected to be finalized by spring 2024, this comprehensive plan will establish specific targets to improve student outcomes. These will include measures to accelerate program completion and enhance course scheduling and modality offerings, ensuring they align with student demand and needs.

Collecting Data on and Analyzing Retention, Persistence, and Completion

As part of the [Perkins V reporting](#) requirements, GRCC tracks performance and completion of students in career and technical programs. Additional core indicators for Workforce Development students are student scores on state and national certification exams.

GRCC also monitors a number of [additional retention and completion data points](#), including graduation rate within 150% of the expected completion time and the number of online credit hours. GRCC also tracks the transfer trends of students, and measures the success rate of at-risk students with breakdowns by residence, income, gender, age, and other factors, including chosen modes of instruction. “At-Risk” students, those who are determined to be more likely than the average student population to withdraw from college before the next term, are identified using predictive analytics through the EAB [Navigate platform](#). These data trigger the early alert support system and also provide an important resource for assessing the efficacy and adequacy of faculty engagement efforts, support programming, and reporting processes.

Applying Retention, Persistence, and Completion Data

The retention and persistence data collected by the College provide essential information at the institutional level as well as the program level. As noted, many of the specific data points provide immediate information about the adequacy and success of student-facing support programs, while others allow academic programs an additional measure of student success in their career and professional development. Recent [improvements to the College’s Early Alert programs](#), for example, were driven by collecting retention and utilization data to better identify student risk factors. Increased awareness of these risk factors, including access to basic needs, led GRCC to develop the “[Get Help](#)” initiative, connecting students with support systems including childcare, food assistance, and emergency funding. Helping students satisfy basic living necessities increases their ability to persist and complete.

Data collected and analyzed as part of the APR process and accreditation reporting are examples of the broad use of persistence and completion data by program, combined with current and future projections of market and employer needs. These data, as well as other program and institutional data collected by the IR office, are widely used for program improvements and adjustments.

An additional example of this use of data at the institutional level is the Academic Pathways program. GRCC offers students career and program direction through 12 Academic Pathways. The College collects and analyzes information related to student [persistence and completion by Pathway](#), helping to inform the impact of each pathway, the coordination of campus resources for programs in the pathway, and employability trends over time. One institutional change resulting from this assessment was an adjustment to the [advising structure](#) (developed as part of [CAP 2.2](#)), using a discipline-based experience within the Pathways. This structure has now changed so students have an advising team that includes faculty members in their chosen discipline.

GRCC’s student retention, persistence, and completion data has also led the College to evaluate its college readiness programming. The [Academic Foundations Program \(AFP\)](#) courses, primarily college readiness coursework in English and Math, were redesigned. Using retention data to identify a minimum of 15 credits of non-AFP courses as an indicator of success and retention, the College revised its summer intervention offering to create the [Summer Bridge Program](#) in 2018. The goal of this program is to lower the incidence of developmental education at the college. GRCC’s program was used as a model for a state initiative, the [Michigan Community College Association Academic](#)

Catch-up Program.

In the College's data collection efforts for national IPEDS reporting, GRCC gains insight into institutional retention and completion trends as well as the ability to compare institutional data with comparative data from similar institutions or for similar student populations. Through this process, the College can view and analyze retention and completion data from different perspectives, including Pell Grant status, prior college experience, and attendance level.

Extending Use of Student Retention Data

Recent institutional data indicators have identified areas for future [planned improvements](#) to impact student retention and completion. These include developing targeted and alternative communication efforts to connect with students, exploring new software to track advising activities, and creating more culturally responsive course syllabi as documented in our [Strategic Initiative dashboard](#).

Processes and Methodologies Reflect Good Practice

GRCC's IR office creates annual reports on retention. These reports have data points that are very similar to the data the College submits to external data systems, such as IPEDS. The reports include enrollments/demographics, fall-to-winter retention, fall-to-fall retention, graduation yield rate, and Perkins indicators. In addition, GRCC tracks retention and graduation rates by certain demographics including race/ethnicity, gender, and age. These data allow the college to identify populations where there may be [equity gaps in retention, completion, and success](#). GRCC uses IPEDS definitions for persistence and degree completion because they allow performance [comparisons to other community colleges](#).

GRCC also uses [EAB's student success predictive modeling](#) to identify low, moderate, or high risk students. This predictive model uses both pre-enrollment and enrollment data to identify a risk factor to each student. These risk factors allows the College, especially academic advisors, to assess each student's risk and design effective outreach campaigns.

Through the work of the [Provost's Council and the President's Executive Leadership Team](#), GRCC is consistently monitoring retention, persistence, and completion data to provide faculty and staff information for improving teaching and learning, advising, career planning, and graduation of students.

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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

GRCC's commitment to continuous quality improvement in educational programming, learning environments, and student support services is demonstrated through comprehensive assessment of educational programming and student learning outcomes. The College's APR process engages program advisory committees, full- and part-time faculty, administration, and staff in reviewing key performance indicators on a five-year cycle of assessment and improvement. Using course, program, general education, and co-curricular outcomes, student learning is assessed across students' educational experiences. GRCC assesses student learning using direct and indirect measures to collect data and information, applying these data to drive formative curricular and instructional improvement. A healthy, engaged, and sophisticated culture of assessment provides the College with the information needed to identify areas to address and additional opportunities for improvement.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Argument

Shared Governance

[Shared governance](#) is fundamental to the culture and operations at GRCC. GRCC's Board of Trustees (BoT - please see [GRCC Acronym List](#)), administration, faculty, staff, and students have numerous means to impact the priorities, policies, procedures, and outcomes at the College. Shared governance is achieved through leadership and membership of College teams and committees and provides vision and governance for the College, advances institutional planning, and facilitates programming, policy, and procedural development and implementation.

GRCC's BoT consists of seven members elected in local biennial elections. The Board operates on a [Policy Governance model](#) and delegates all operational oversight to the president. In doing so, the Board serves as the sounding board for College governance, receiving regular updates from College stakeholders including monitoring reports on the Strategic Plan and College finances, as well as progress updates from student leadership, the GRCC Foundation, the Faculty Association, and the local community. The Board also provides regular updates on Board activities, actions, and decisions to these stakeholders. This shared governance approach is reflected in the [Board's Standing Agenda](#) and described in points 3 and 4 in the [Board Policy: Meetings](#), covering the order of business for Board meetings as well as inclusion of community input and advice.

GRCC's Academic Governing Council (AGC) is a collaborative effort of faculty and academic administrators to impact academic policy, strengthen communication, and increase involvement in academic issues. As of the start of the current academic year, [voting members of the AGC](#) include 58 faculty members and 17 administrators, reflecting the College's commitment to shared governance on academic issues. As described in the [AGC by-laws](#), the AGC includes several standing

committees, including those with faculty and administrator membership (Sabbatical, Curriculum Approval), those with faculty-only membership (IIPD, Excellence in Education), and those with administrator-only membership (Deans' Council). Recommendations from AGC are presented to the Provost for review, evaluation or approval, and college-wide implementation upon approval.

While the College's Strategic Plan provides the roadmap and action goals for the College, the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for guiding and monitoring the Plan. SLT provides a forum for College constituency groups to provide input into the direction of the College, guiding the development and implementation of the Strategic Plan, reviewing benchmark data, studying budget realities, and offering recommendations for budget priorities. [SLT's broad campus-wide membership](#) is tied to positions held at the College, such as bargaining unit leadership, deans, vice presidents, faculty, and area representatives, as well as representatives from a wide variety of current campus teams and the BoT. In addition to opportunities to contribute to the strategic planning process through the SLT, involvement on the Strategic Initiative (SI) teams is also open to the campus community.

Additional examples of the College's commitment to shared governance are the multitude of collaborative [advisory, oversight, and implementation teams](#) at the College. These teams and committees include representatives from faculty, staff, and student stakeholders and are facilitated through the Instructional Support and Institutional Planning (ISIP) division. Examples include the Curriculum Approval Team, Distance Learning Faculty Advisory Board, General Education Review Team, Honors Program Leadership Team, and Institutional Review Board.

The [academic department structure](#) ensures that each department has either an elected department head or an appointed program director (determined by the Faculty Association contract). These positions provide faculty representation and a voice in academic matters including class scheduling, curriculum development, and academic policy. GRCC academic departments are organized into five schools: Business and Industry; Health Sciences; Liberal Arts; Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); and Workforce Training.

While the College's structure and collaborative environment provides a foundation for shared governance, day-to-day practices and processes ensure that all voices and viewpoints have the opportunity for providing input, including these examples:

GRCC [teams regularly gather data](#) from students and employees to determine satisfaction with priorities, policies, procedures, and outcomes, specifically related to the Strategic Plan's Indicators of Success.

While the [curriculum development and review](#) processes begin with individual faculty, academic departments, and ISIP department staff, additional faculty, staff, and administrators collaborate across the process through the AGC, the SLT, and the Deans' Council.

[Students have many opportunities](#) to contribute to shared governance at GRCC. From participation in Student Government, Campus Activities Board, AGC, SLT, and regular presentations to the BoT, students are an active, involved, and engaged part of the community.

Effective Use of Institutional Data

Through the work of the [Office of Institutional Research](#), feedback and data are gathered from GRCC's internal and external constituents. This information is used to assess the outcomes of policies and practices, identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions regarding the

need for institutional change. GRCC's dedication to using data to reach informed decisions is evident in the Strategic Planning Process, Board Monitoring Reports, campus-wide surveys and employment reports, Academic Program Review (APR), and Teaching and Learning Quality Monitoring (TLQM) Reports.

SLT is responsible for making recommendations regarding the framework, goals, and priorities of the College's strategic plan. After BoT approval, the SLT organizes and guides the ongoing implementation of the strategic plan, including launching projects, reviewing benchmarking data, and analyzing progress. A core component of the strategic planning process includes using data to inform [Strategic Initiative](#) (SI) development (formally CAP, College Action Projects). The SIs are led by teams who report plans, efforts, and progress to SLT. SLT members review the progress and offer strategies to move projects forward based on those reports. Each of the Strategic Goals have Goal Team Leaders who develop and present an annual [Board Monitoring Report](#). This report is used to inform the BoT on the progress of each SI within that Strategic Goal. SLT's progress for each year is also documented in an [executive summary](#), which is presented annually to the BoT and published for the College community on the Strategic Plan website and in the College's blog, *GRCC Today*.

Data Collection Processes

GRCC uses a variety of input mechanisms to gather feedback from students, staff, faculty, and other College stakeholders. [Student perceptions and feedback](#) are regularly collected using the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory. The CCSSE was most recently administered in the Winter of 2021, and the Noel-Levitz was last administered in the Winter of 2022. In addition, [GRCC faculty, staff, and stakeholder input](#) is regularly collected and analyzed using the [Personal Assessment of the College Environment](#) (PACE) and [Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool](#) (ICAT) surveys. These results have been used as indicators of success when measuring the progress of prior iterations of strategic planning goals.

GRCC's Human Resources (HR) department also collects data as part of the College's Affirmative Action Plan. This plan, required by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, includes collecting and applying workforce statistics about gender and ethnicity to inform how the institution advertises and recruits positions. The [Affirmative Action Plan](#) is also used to inform promotions and transfers and to assess possible trends in resignations and other separations from the institution. HR uses a [dashboard](#) to assess time to hire, retention of employees, and diversity of hires. Recently, data from these data collection efforts was used to evaluate and revise the hiring processes, leading to the implementation of an [Evidence-Based Selection Process](#).

Data collection and usage is an essential part of the curriculum evaluation and assessment process through the work of the twelve [Academic Pathways Curriculum Advisory Teams](#) (APCATs). These teams meet to review data related to the pathway concentration programs. Each team reviews data specific to their Academic Pathway, including enrollment trends, course completion, pass rate patterns, and key performance indicators (KPIs) including credit accumulation, retention, and completion. Recently the data informed a [decision to restructure](#) the Academic Pathways, dividing one pathway into three. This revision improved the ability to define students' goals, provide more specific program information, and improve advising.

Through [TLQM](#) Reports, GRCC tracks progress on process measures, outcomes, and yearly improvement plans for key academic processes. These progress reports are reviewed by Deans'

Council. While the frequency and focus areas vary, the [TLQM collects and reports data](#) regularly from the Library and Learning Commons, Distance Learning, and Developmental Education.

Using Input to Set Academic Requirements, Policy, and Processes

GRCC's collaborative environment and shared governance structures, combined with extensive data-collection processes, ensures the institution's continued focus on enhancing engagement across stakeholders, promoting ownership, accountability, and equity in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes.

The faculty, administration, and staff all have roles in setting academic requirements and policy through collaborative structures that include the [course and program development and revision](#) processes that are managed through the [Curriculog System](#). Curriculog is an automated system for curriculum approval with the goal to approve course and program changes and improve communication about the curriculum across campus. Other decision-making bodies, such as the Curriculum Approval Team (CAT), the AGC, and the APCATs, also involve faculty, staff, and administrative representatives in reviewing, establishing, and revising policies related to GRCC's academic structure.

Based on the College's [Curriculum Policy \(7.18\)](#), faculty are responsible for developing the curriculum and for ensuring its academic rigor and relevance. The policy guides the development and institutional processes of Program Development, Program Review, Course Development, and Course Review and Revision. Through these processes, faculty define the learning outcomes for students for both programs and courses and develop a cohesive curriculum that incorporates the General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) and aligns Program and Course Outcomes, as appropriate. The multistep review process includes the [CAT](#), a standing committee of the AGC, which consists of over 20 faculty, administrators, and staff from areas across the College. CAT is the primary body to review, suggest modifications, and make decisions concerning curriculum development at GRCC. The curriculum for the Academic Pathways concentration programs is unique in that these are developed by multiple collaborators, often from different departments, who make up [APCATs](#). These twelve teams, one for each Academic Pathway, meet on an as needed basis to revise curriculum. After the revisions are complete, the curricular work of these teams is taken through the same process as described above, including review by the CAT.

As described previously, the AGC, consisting of faculty and academic administration members, focuses on academic issues and policies. The [AGC reviews and revises academic policies](#) based on research by smaller sub teams. Data and meeting minutes are shared broadly, providing ample time for additional feedback and input from the campus community. Recent examples of academic policies that have been reviewed and revised by AGC include the Common Syllabus Template, Instructional Materials Policy, Student Code of Conduct, and Graduation Requirements.

The [Bookstore Liaison Team](#) (BLT) facilitates communication between the store and the College, focusing on timely and accurate availability of course-related materials for students. Using data from College and bookstore sources, the team identifies ways GRCC faculty, staff, and administrators can support material selection and adoption for faculty and positive purchasing experiences for students. BLT representatives include bookstore managers; staff from GRCC Printing Services, Financial Aid, and Purchasing offices; and faculty and staff from the academic schools.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Argument

Operational Staff Qualifications and Training

GRCC's [HR department](#) supports and facilitates employee processes including recruiting, hiring, and training. In 2022, GRCC was recognized by the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) and *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education* as one of 16 community colleges with a "Most Promising Places to Work in Community Colleges" ([MPPWCC](#)) award. The MPPWCC study recognizes exceptional commitments by community and technical colleges to diversity (including race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, class, veterans, and thought) through student and staff recruitment and retention practices, inclusive learning and working environments, and meaningful community service and engagement opportunities.

[GRCC provides](#) competitive salaries, excellent benefits, and a healthy work environment and ensures that its faculty, staff, and administrators are highly qualified for their positions at the College through comprehensive recruiting practices. Potential employees enter a [screening process](#) and are vetted against job descriptions that describe needed qualifications for each position. Qualified candidates who meet or exceed the minimum qualifications are moved forward in the hiring process. Hiring committee members must [undergo training](#) on confidentiality, bias in hiring, and the hiring process.

The goal of GRCC's HR department is to build an outstanding workforce to support the work of GRCC by hiring the most qualified candidates. GRCC uses an [Evidence-based Selection process](#) for hiring staff positions that adds objective data-driven decisions to help mitigate unintentional bias by reducing the variation in conclusions generally associated with human judgment. This process allows HR and hiring managers to stay focused on the foundational and occupational competencies needed for the position while reducing time to fill vacancies. [HR monitors hiring statistics](#) and other data points to assess the effectiveness of this process. GRCC recognizes that this is a new process and continuous improvements are needed to ensure the goal of equitable and fair hiring outcomes. GRCC will continue to gather feedback as this work moves forwards.

HR coordinates a wide variety of [professional development opportunities](#) that promote employee enrichment and enhance work-group effectiveness, from on-boarding of new employees and

technology training, to enhancing workplace competencies. One of these opportunities is the GRCC [Leadership Institute](#), a seven-month intensive cohort program committed to strengthening new or emerging leaders from across campus. Conference attendance for staff and administrators is encouraged and supported with College funds. All full-time employees are also eligible for [tuition waivers](#) for GRCC courses and tuition reimbursement at other institutions. Staff can also apply for [Support Staff Professional Development \(SSPD\) grants](#) through the GRCC Foundation to support their work and professional development. Staff and administrators who are part of the [Meet and Confer Performance Evaluation Process](#) are required to participate in professional development as part of their annual performance review process. Collectively, GRCC budgets more than \$1 million dollars annually for [employee professional development](#), in addition to departmental budgets that offer opportunities for conferences and other learning opportunities.

Hiring and Retaining Qualified Faculty

GRCC supports its educational mission by [hiring and retaining experienced faculty](#) with both educational and real-world credentials. HR collaborates with departmental faculty to establish the qualifications needed to advance academic programs and fill faculty positions. The School Dean and the Provost then review the required credentials to ensure that they meet the needs of the College and that Higher Learning Commission standards are met.

Continuing education is an important part of GRCC's culture and annual performance review of employees. The individual Academic Schools (Business and Industry, Health Sciences, Liberal Arts, STEM, and Workforce Training) conduct annual reviews of faculty through the [Faculty Performance Evaluation \(FPE\)](#) process, which includes a minimum of nine hours of professional development. New faculty and faculty who teach hybrid or online courses must complete the [Online and Hybrid Certification Course \(OHCC\)](#). The [Teaching, Learning, and Distance Education \(TLDE\)](#) department is another resource for faculty professional development, including facilitated workshops and learning opportunities, annual events such as Faculty Learning Day, and the New Faculty Institute. All faculty, including adjunct faculty, have access to professional development funds through the [IIPD grant program](#), [Adjunct Professional Development Dollars](#), and/or [TLDE Innovation Grants](#) that support a variety of activities, including conference attendance, materials purchases, and professional society memberships, among others.

Infrastructure and Planning

GRCC's infrastructure planning and development operates using participatory process methodologies. Applying an [annual resource request process](#), Financial Services, Facilities, and Information Technology Departments are responsible for identifying and responding to changing needs and operational requirements using input from end users. The College's [Master Plan](#) reflects the planning process, including building and landscape enhancement projects. The Strategic Plan, specifically [Strategic Goal 5](#), addresses Infrastructure and Sustainability with priorities including a balance of physical space and technology.

Physical Infrastructure

GRCC's physical [infrastructure and facilities](#) support the College's operations and program delivery.

The downtown Grand Rapids learning spaces include the Main and DeVos Campuses, which house most of the operational and student support offices and are home to nearly all of the academic departments. A majority of the College's courses and programs are delivered from these facilities, including the Albert P. Smith Music Center, Calkins Science Center, Gerald R. Ford Fieldhouse, Peter and Pat Cook Academic Hall, Phyllis Fratzke Early Childhood Learning Center, Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall, Sneden Hall and Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center. GRCC's Lakeshore Campus in Holland serves students in Ottawa County. The Leslie E. Tassell M-TEC, located in southeast Grand Rapids, a few miles from Main Campus, houses hands-on training for many workforce programs. GRCC also offers courses at [regional and satellite locations](#) in Kent County including Rockford and Caledonia.

As part of the Master Plan to assess existing facilities, identify needed renovations and new facilities, and identify opportunities to develop or replace existing assets, several key campus buildings have undergone [major renovations](#) in recent years. These include the Custer Alumni House, Gerald R. Ford Fieldhouse, Lakeshore Campus, Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall, Steven C. Ender Hall, and Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center. More than \$78 million dollars in [infrastructure and physical campus improvement](#) have been made over the past five years. The Master Plan also includes expanding parking, green space, and social spaces over the next few years.

Supporting ongoing evaluation of campus learning spaces, the [Learning Environment Team \(LET\)](#), a standing committee of AGC, ensures that classroom spaces meet or exceed the requirements to deliver courses and programs and to create spaces outside the classroom for informal and formal interaction. The LET maintains flexible and safe learning spaces by recommending furniture purchases, exploring new technology for course delivery, and collaborating with Information Technology Services (ITS) on best practices and classroom technology needs.

Technology Infrastructure

GRCC's [ITS](#) department is committed to aligning technology resources to support students, faculty, and staff by identifying goals, setting priorities, and equipping and supporting the community with quality technological resources. Operating in a landscape of ever-changing technologies, ITS supports current educational programs and business operations while [planning for the future](#). The mission of ITS is to provide reliable and sustainable technology services in a timely and fiscally responsible manner.

ITS comprises seven departments that include Academic Applications, Customer Support, Enterprise Applications, Infrastructure, Media Technologies, Project Management, and Security. ITS departmental plans are developed with stakeholder input from all areas of campus, including faculty, students, and staff, to align with the College's strategic goals. This work is accomplished, in part, through [project intake and planning](#), a process that is becoming more agile and responsive and is improving resource allocation commitments.

The mission of ITS at Grand Rapids Community College is to provide reliable and sustainable technology services in a timely and fiscally responsible manner. Committed to meeting the needs of all students, faculty, and staff by equipping and supporting the community with quality technological resources, ITS seeks to implement solutions that are innovative and supportive to the College mission, vision, values, and goals. Using the College Strategic Plan as the framework, the ITS Strategic Plan is a living document providing a guide for decisions, goals, prioritization, planning,

and implementation of technology-enabled administrative and instructional processes and tools.

To support student access to educational opportunities, distance education is a priority at GRCC. To ensure that the structure is in place to deliver and sustain high quality online and hybrid experiences, the [TLDE](#) department provides and promotes faculty professional development and support for online and hybrid education course development and implementation.

All courses offered in distance modalities follow the [distance course request and approval process](#) and meet the College's [Distance Education Standards](#), based on the national [Quality Matters](#) standards. After development, courses are reviewed by the Online Course Review Committee and approved by the Executive Director of TLDE. All faculty teaching online complete TLDE's [Online and Hybrid Certification Course \(OHCC\)](#) before developing a distance class.

Strategic Goals Related to College Resources

The strategic goals put forth in the [2023-28 Strategic Plan](#) are realistic based on GRCC's organizational structure, its human and infrastructure resources, financial strengths, and perceived areas for growth and improvement. GRCC has worked diligently over the past several years through the [annual resource planning process](#) to align human, fiscal, capital, and technological infrastructure resource allocation in support of the strategic plan to achieve the mission, vision, values, and goals of the institution. This alignment has helped to ensure that the College has sufficient resources to support instructional programming, student services, external partners, and general operations. As part of the FY23/24 budget process, for example, several new positions were requested to support targeted populations. A November mid-year budget amendment was presented to the BoT to add a Veteran's Success Coordinator and a full-time position in ODEI to support under-represented students.

The Strategic Plan's [Strategic Initiatives \(SIs\)](#) were developed to enable the alignment of goals, resource allocation, and implementation of action steps. The process for selecting the goals and identifying the SIs (formerly College Actions Projects or CAPs) was accomplished through collaborative efforts among faculty, staff, and administrators. The SIs ensure that financial resources are available to fund the educational goals and initiatives at the College.

The College's five-year [budget model](#) has been developed with a goal of building surpluses, rather than closing annual deficits. This budgeting approach, combined with the [Resource Request Process](#), allows the College to respond to changing student and College needs and requires budget, space, and technology project planning to begin at the departmental level. The [IT Project Request and Prioritization process](#) also aligns College resources to the strategic goals by evaluating requests related to security, technical feasibility, and resource capacity planning.

Non-academic departments collaborate through the annual [Department Planning process](#) to identify areas where processes and services can be developed or improved. Requests for financial support for these projects can be made through the budget development processes. Department plans include the department's mission and how it aligns with the Strategic Plan and goals; a five-year outlook of issues and trends in their area that will affect the Strategic Plan, such as projections on enrollment, student completion, and finances; a risk assessment and mitigation strategies for the identified trends; and, finally, the needs for the upcoming year. Final revised plans are submitted for approval and routed to the Executive Budget Control Office for final review and approval. Department plans from the Academic Schools are aligned to this process in incorporating relevant information from the

[Academic Department Annual Report and Plan process](#) to advocate for resources for each School, based on guidance and input from faculty department heads or program directors, provided according to their analysis of progress on department operational, professional development, curriculum development, learning outcomes assessment, and advising plans.

The planning process includes identifying individual and departmental initiatives or [Departmental Action Projects \(DAPs\)](#). This section includes strategies that require funding as well as funding-neutral initiatives. The DAPs must be tied back to the mission of the department and the College's strategic plan. Plans must include an indicator of success and a way to analyze the budgetary impact in terms of savings, risk, and/or expenditures. These plans are due in the spring of each year and are monitored and adjusted as necessary throughout the fiscal year.

GRCC's [College Advancement Department](#) plays a vital role in ensuring alignment of College resources to the mission and vision of the College. Through the work of the [GRCC Foundation](#) and the [Grants Department](#), GRCC's educational mission is supported and enhanced. The GRCC Foundation supports students' educational goals through scholarship awards and infrastructure improvements through fundraising efforts. The Grants Department supports the mission, vision, and strategic goals of the College by assisting faculty and staff in obtaining grant funding to support educational initiatives. Recent federal grant awards supporting the work of the strategic plan include a Title III Strengthening Institutions Program grant (\$2.1 million) and three TRIO grants from the U.S. Department of Education, Education Opportunity Center (\$1.1 million) Student Support Services (\$2.3 million) and Student Support Services for STEM (\$1.3 million). All three awards are aimed at continuously improving the College's focus on equity and successful student goal achievement.

Budgeting and Financial Processes

The budgeting process begins with department-level planning and alignment with the Strategic Plan's SIs, supported by effective forecasting. Departments establish annual goals, followed by requesting any additional resources (financial, human resources, IT, and space) that have been identified to achieve those goals. All requests are gathered and then reviewed, evaluated, and prioritized across the institution by Executive Budget Control officers and Executive Leadership. In addition to the annual, formal budget process, the College maintains a dynamic, [five-year financial forecast](#) that is updated continually to assess changing economic, environmental, and regulatory conditions and to analyze the longer-term financial impact of programmatic and operational opportunities as they arise. The fiscal process encourages ongoing [monitoring](#), [transparency](#), and [communication](#). Development and monitoring of the budget are the responsibility of the Finance and Administration Office, which provides monthly updates to the BoT for review. Transparency reports, made available to the general public, as required by Section 217 (1) of the Michigan State School Aid Act, include the annual budget, the mid-year budget, audited financial statements, general fund revenues and expenditures, debt service obligations, as well as employee contracts and health insurance. Communication surrounding the College's budgeting process and calendar is facilitated by the Executive Leadership Team, with input and discussion from the individual departments and units.

This [budget development process](#), which applies to general operating funds and major auxiliary funds, such as parking, is [periodically reviewed by the BoT](#) and is shared with the President's Executive Leadership Team and other campus constituencies as circumstances dictate. This process,

for example, is a primary input into the annual tuition-setting recommendation and led to the establishment of a Budget Stabilization Fund several years ago as the financial impact of fluctuating enrollments was brought into focus.

Oversight by the BoT, as defined by the [Budgeting and Forecasting](#) and [Board Planning and Agenda](#) Board policies, includes required annual budget planning meetings, quarterly budget reviews, and budget work sessions as needed. Budget performance for the general operating and other funds, as well as an update on the College's cash position and investment portfolio, is formally reviewed by the BoT on a monthly basis and is made available campus-wide and to the public. The College undergoes an [annual certified audit](#), which is presented to the BoT, available on the College's website, provided to various state and federal agencies. Additionally, a summary of the financial statements is published in the local newspaper.

Based on auditors' recommendations, the BoT has established a goal of [maintaining net assets](#) in the range of 15% to 20% of general fund gross revenues to provide the necessary flexibility to address financial challenges, such as revenue shortfalls and unanticipated and/or emergency expenses, as they occur, without resorting to significant tuition/fee increases or programming reductions. This balanced budget not only assures compliance with the College's enabling state statute, it allows the College to maintain adequate reserves to ensure the continuation of instructional programming and support services to students.

Data-Driven Educational Goals

GRCC's budget process, including the annual planning process, departmental planning, and employee goal setting and planning, provides an established system of checks and balances standardizing allocations, reallocations, reductions, and funding of prioritized initiatives and ensures that educational goals are funded and met. As part of the budget and strategic planning processes, GRCC's Office of [Institutional Research](#) compiles and reports information from various data sources, including enrollment reports and campus, local, and national data, such as Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), to set, monitor and review not only the College's budget but also the strategic goals, academic programs, and curriculum. For example, during the FY22/23 budget process, in order to be responsive to student needs and to respect the whole student, [Student Life requested](#) and received budget allocations to support a dedicated DHHS staff person to serve GRCC students.

Each [academic department](#) has an individual annual budget used to meet programmatic, course delivery, professional development, and outreach needs, including expendable items used in laboratory courses, equipment purchase and repair, and expenses related to community outreach programs. With oversight from the aligned school associate dean, academic department heads or program directors determine how best to support the work of the department. While these budgets roll over annually, they are reassessed to ensure that they are adequate to meet the fluctuations in costs of supplies and materials. Program needs are also regularly assessed and addressed based on industry and clinical practice changes or partners; for example, GRCC's [healthcare programs](#) recently purchased mannequins representing diverse ethnic and gender profiles as well as replacing equipment to remain current with clinical partners' sites.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Argument

Allocation of Resources to Support GRCC's Mission

One of the highest priorities of GRCC is to uphold the mission, vision, values, and goals of the College by allocating the bulk of our resources to support instruction and student services. College policies and processes reflect the institution's intentionality in monitoring, communicating, forecasting, and responding to the financial needs of the College. GRCC's commitment to educating students is reflected in its [budget allocation](#) of over 66% of its resources to instruction and instructional support, which is higher than the average allocation of other community colleges in the [state](#). This allocation includes not only classroom faculty, but the non-classroom supports that contribute to student completion, such as enrollment services, financial aid, advising, and college success coaches.

Through the strategic planning process, internal and external stakeholders gather and evaluate information needed to develop and implement programs and services that meet the changing educational needs of the College's students. The [Strategic Plan's goals](#) and initiatives reflect this focus on the College's educational mission, with three of the five goals centered on effective teaching and learning, successful completion and transfer, and community impact through educational programming and outreach. The defined priorities, action projects, and success indicators are aligned through the budgeting process to support GRCC's mission and values.

The SLT monitors and assesses progress on the strategic goals, priorities, and initiatives, facilitating ongoing implementation of the plan as well as continuous improvement at all levels. The SLT regularly monitors the work and progress of the strategic plan and reports progress to the BoT in [Monitoring Reports](#) and [Executive Summaries](#).

Assessment of Student Learning, Planning, and Budgeting

GRCC assesses student learning through cyclical processes, including data-driven activities that align with operations, planning, and budgeting. Assessment data originates from faculty assessment projects in the FPE, GELOs assessment, the Office of Institutional Research, the Academic Department Annual Report and Plan process, and the Academic Program Review process.

The [assessment of student learning](#) seeks to understand and improve student learning. The review process sets standards and criteria for learning quality but also gathers, analyzes, and interprets data on student achievement. As part of the annual FPE, faculty are required to identify a learning outcome to assess in a course (CLO or GELO) or program (PLO), develop methods to measure success, acquire data, and report that information to their department head and associate dean. Faculty identify the outcomes selected and methods used, but a standardized template is available to make the data more uniform. Faculty training supports standardized assessment processes and effective use of data to improve teaching techniques and curricula when needed. Modifications to facilities, changes to course modality, or equipment and supply purchases may also be requested and implemented as a result of this work. Since the assessment of student learning is embedded into individual faculty annual FPE reports, annual department plans and reports, and the five-year APR cycle, faculty leaders (department heads/program directors) review these results with their departments. Deans then review them with the department heads/program directors, and later with the Provost to justify and advocate for resources. This review also relates to scheduled reviews of course fees and budget requests. GRCC's sophisticated [planning and reporting process](#) aligns the review of assessment results, annual reports, and APR reports with budgetary resource decision-making.

The College's [GELOs assessment process](#) was revised and implemented as part of the 2018-22 Strategic Plan with guidance from the HLC Assessment Academy and is sustained in part through the FPE process (faculty may select a GELO to assess), the Academic Department Report and Plan process, and financial resources through a budget to sustain assessment work in ISIP.

The [Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment](#) and ISIP area facilitate these assessment efforts and monitor the overall assessment efforts. Faculty collect course evaluation data using the [Class Climate Course Evaluation Feedback System](#), apply the data to their ongoing course improvements, and report results through the FPE process. Course evaluation data are also used to inform decisions related to academic departmental planning and budgeting.

As noted, the annual [Academic Department Report and Plan](#) process is an integral part of the College's budgeting process. Academic department reports include department activities and accomplishments, as well as plans for future activities and projections for future budget needs. As needed, Deans may collaboratively make budget adjustments within their schools, and the Provost may realign funds among the schools. The Provost Council prioritizes additional identified needs with Executive Leadership approval for inclusion in the next budget cycle.

Student learning outcomes assessment and student success data are also integrated into the [APR process](#) that determines the efficacy of all the College's academic programs and is a place where requests for equipment, new faculty positions, and budgetary changes can be made. GRCC [programs complete the APR process](#) every five years, but earlier reviews may be requested. The process includes an analysis of KPIs, including program enrollment, completion, and transfer; a review of the courses and skills acquired that either ensure transferability or attainment of skills for aligned careers. [APR findings](#) lead to program continuation, enhancement, or discontinuation.

Inclusive Planning Processes

From the College's Strategic Planning Process, Budget Review Process, Resource Request Process, and Academic Reporting and Planning process to development of the Facilities Master Plan and ITS Planning process, GRCC engages in comprehensive planning that is inclusive and participatory. These planning processes incorporate the work and input from a wide range of internal and external stakeholders and result in written plans that guide the institution's efforts to best serve the West Michigan community's educational needs.

The development process for each of these plans (described throughout this document) includes representation from key stakeholder groups and considers appropriate data and input, leading to effective decision-making. For example, both the Strategic Planning Process and the Departmental Planning processes are led by cross-campus teams with extensive data sources and input opportunities.

The development of the College's Master Plan is an example of this inclusive planning process. In 2019, the college began the process of updating the College's campus master plan, integrating the College's Strategic Plan with a campus-wide space analysis and space needs assessment. The overall goal of this master planning effort was to assist the College in translating strategic goals and objectives into a physical plan that identifies where GRCC should focus resources to meet future demands for the next ten to twenty years. Developing the new campus Master Plan involved [extensive input](#) from internal and external stakeholders, a comprehensive campus space utilization study, and an analysis of parking supply and demand needs along with urban mobility trends. The plan was completed in 2020, in the midst of a global pandemic, and is a road-map concept for future capital improvement needs and opportunities. Since the completion of the plan, several projects are already in process and we have been working diligently to allocate future resources to fund identified facility improvement to enhance the learning environment in support of student learning.

Responsive Budget Planning Processes

The College's funding is provided mainly through tuition and fees (38%), from local property tax revenue (31%), the State of Michigan (30%), and miscellaneous sources (1%). Because a majority of the College's funding comes from GRCC students and the local community (close to \$87 million), the College is committed to diligent stewardship by developing and providing academic programming and services that meet the needs of the community. While support from property taxes and the State of Michigan has been stable, student enrollment has seen a decline in recent years, causing a decline in revenue from tuition and fees. [Statewide projections](#) for annual high school graduates are also showing decreases. [Michigan community colleges](#) are expected to bear the brunt of that enrollment decline.

Anticipating declining enrollment, the College made enrollment a high priority throughout the strategic plan's [goals and priorities](#). Goal 1 priorities include a focus on adult and non-traditional students and developing a course schedule (location, day, time, delivery mode) that meets student needs. Goal 2 priorities include increased use of career planning tools as a means to improve retention and completion and a focus on retention and graduation rates of historically underserved students. Goal 4 priorities include a comprehensive strategic enrollment management plan, enhanced offerings at the Lakeshore Campus, and increased focus on the K-12 partnerships with businesses across the region. Goal 5 brings these priorities to operational aspects of sustainability, and

maintaining an appropriate balance of physical and technology infrastructure.

In addition, the [budget review process](#) promotes financial stability, sustainability, and responsiveness. The College has been diligent to improve its budget review strategies, concentrating on building a culture of responsibility and accountability. The long-term planning and budgeting process now focuses on planning for the future rather than responding to short-term financial fluctuations. The goal of the five-year budget model is to build surpluses, giving the College the ability to respond to changing student needs and enrollment by allocating planned surpluses. The budget process includes ongoing reductions and reallocations where appropriate, data-informed prioritization of budget surpluses, and identification of long-term projections to predict available surpluses. This work also led to the establishment of a [Budget Stabilization Fund](#) as the financial impact of fluctuating enrollments was brought into focus.

The College also maintains a [five-year financial forecast](#) that is regularly updated to account for fluctuating economic, environmental, and regulatory conditions and to project the longer-term financial impact of programmatic and operational changes. This model is applied to the general operating fund and major auxiliary funds. The BoT, the President's Executive Leadership Team, Cabinet, and other campus constituencies regularly review these forecasts and include the information in their planning.

Responsive Institutional Planning

At all levels of the institution, GRCC anticipates shifting external factors and plans accordingly. The College planning processes anticipate and respond to identified influences such as declining enrollment trends for traditional students, increased demand for flexible learning options, increases in non-academic barriers and student needs, and ongoing demand for relevant coursework and programs to meet student and employer needs. The College's financial, technological, and physical infrastructure must be in place to meet these shifting needs, and the College's culture must be both adaptable and responsive. To ensure that the College is prepared and remains relevant in the community, the College's Strategic and Master plans align with expected changes in demographic shifts, the economic impacts, and ever-changing technology and space needs. Reflecting an intentional continuity in planning, the [Strategic Goals](#) from the 2018-22 Strategic Plan were carried forward into the 2023-28 Strategic Plan, allowing GRCC to build on previous work and ongoing planning processes while meeting the needs of our changing student population.

Examples of this ongoing planning include the work of the SLT. [SLT regularly reviews](#) data reflecting current and projected needs of local business and industry, including data from area economic development agencies such as the [Right Place and Lakeshore Advantage](#). Working with local agencies, the College can better understand the needs of reengaged adult learners, including scheduling and course offerings and non-educational support needs to improve retention, as well as modality, time, and location of course delivery.

Another example of responsive planning is being driven by a strategic initiative analyzing enrollment trends and demographic data to project the impact on enrollment and develop a long-term [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#).

Awareness of demographic changes and shifting workforce needs is built into the College's planning efforts extending from ongoing input through workforce [program advisory boards](#) to the evaluation criteria built into the [Academic Program Review](#) process.

Supporting and expanding [partnerships](#) with local K-12 groups, regional businesses and corporations, industry leaders (such as Amazon, Corewell [formerly Spectrum] Health, and Gentex Corporation), four-year institutions, and local municipalities ensure that GRCC continues to provide students with up-to-date training in emerging and rapidly expanding fields. These partnerships also bridge gaps in community resources while creating opportunities for students to gain the skills needed to advance their careers and attain their goals. These partnerships are critical for GRCCs continuing relevance in the community.

Responsive planning in terms of sustainability, technology, and facilities is built into the Strategic Plan. [Goal 5's Strategic Initiatives](#) focus on understanding and balancing current and future needs for physical space and demands for technology. While the College's responsiveness during COVID-19 demonstrated the institution's agility and ability to use technology effectively to deliver both educational and non-educational support, GRCC is using the knowledge and technical skills gained through the pandemic to continue to improve support for the community of learners.

Overall budget planning and projection work take place throughout the year as GRCC works to position the institution financially to support current and future needs. The general economic conditions and, more specifically, state revenue support, play a critical role in the planning and projection process. The current [state allocation methodology](#) for community colleges in Michigan is based mainly on historical allocations. Due in part to GRCC efforts, the State Budget Act of 2023 included a provision calling for a committee to study the current formula and make recommendations around adjustments to make the process more equitable.

Ongoing Academic and Operational Planning

GRCC has a history and institutional culture of observing trends, foreseeing difficulties, developing actionable plans, and implementing appropriate solutions. The College systematically seeks to improve operations and student outcomes through the Strategic Planning, Master Plan, and Department Planning processes. Implementation of the plans is [monitored and supported](#) through various reporting channels, including the College Action Project (CAP)/Strategic Initiative (SI) reporting process to the SLT, presentations and policy updates at AGC, TLQM reporting to Dean's Council, and from BoT report monitoring.

With a focus on supporting the College's mission, vision, values, and goals, these monitoring and reporting processes include reviewing ongoing progress, developing plans for the future, identifying barriers or challenges, and developing solutions that move the College forward. Regular monitoring reports to the SLT and BoT, and leadership direction provided by the [executive leadership team](#) allow the College to track the plans through a series of [success indicators](#).

These examples of recent [institutional improvements](#) reflect GRCC's responsive academic and operational planning processes:

- Updating and implementing General Education processes and learning outcomes
- Developing procedures to assess General Education Learning Outcomes
- Streamlining the curriculum development and approval process
- Implementing the Academic Pathways model
- Redesigning academic advising and the student onboarding experience
- Integrating Navigate
- Onboarding the faculty evaluation process

Expanding dual enrollment and Early/Middle College
Transforming the IT Project Request and Prioritization Process
Completing major construction projects
Onboarding the GRCC Cares Network for Student Support
Building a one stop Admissions and Student Services area
Redesigning the College's website

Sources

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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

GRCC's institutional resources, structures, processes, and planning align to improve the educational opportunities that the College provides and successfully fulfill the mission. The highly qualified and trained administration, staff, and faculty collaborate through established planning processes and continually strive to improve operations and programming and anticipate challenges and opportunities. GRCC uses data to identify trends, inform decisions, develop and update policies, allocate resources, and implement processes to better serve students and ensure that the West Michigan community's educational needs are met.

GRCC's Strategic Plan strives to improve the student experience through initiatives and projects related to the Five Goals: Teaching and Learning, Completion and Transfer, Community Impact, Equity, and Infrastructure and Sustainability. College leadership and employees understand that, to best serve the community now and in the future, GRCC must be responsive, adaptable, and plan for uncertain times by effectively allocating resources and having the appropriate processes and structures in place.

Sources

There are no sources.