Key to abbreviations used in this report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGC</td>
<td>Academic Governing Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Academic Service Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCO</td>
<td>Budget Control Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMR</td>
<td>Board Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOT</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>College Action Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARP</td>
<td>Course Approval and Revision Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLO</td>
<td>Course Learning Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLS</td>
<td>College Learning Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAP</td>
<td>Department Action Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBCO</td>
<td>Executive Budget Control Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMS</td>
<td>Ethics Monitoring System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIPD</td>
<td>Instructional Improvement and Professional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>Institutional Learning Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOS</td>
<td>Indicator of Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISIS</td>
<td>Instructional Support and Interdisciplinary Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLC</td>
<td>Library and Learning Commons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MACRAO</td>
<td>Michigan Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOLA</td>
<td>Michigan Quality Leadership Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTEC</td>
<td>Michigan Technical Education Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MVV</td>
<td>Mission, Vision, and Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAF</td>
<td>Position Authorization Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO</td>
<td>Program Learning Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLT</td>
<td>President’s Leadership Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAAR</td>
<td>Selection Activity Appointment Record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAS</td>
<td>School of Arts and Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLT</td>
<td>Strategic Leadership Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SoTL</td>
<td>Scholarship of Teaching and Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPS</td>
<td>Strategic Planning System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
<td>School of Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWD</td>
<td>School of Workforce Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRiO/SSS</td>
<td>TRiO Student Support Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

Introduction ............................................................................................................................................... 1  
Profile of the organization .................................................................................................................. 1  
The purpose of this report ..................................................................................................................... 1  
Criterion 1. Mission .................................................................................................................................. 2  
Core Component 1A ............................................................................................................................. 2  
Core Component 1B ............................................................................................................................. 5  
Core Component 1C ............................................................................................................................. 6  
Core Component 1D ............................................................................................................................. 8  
Criterion 2. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct ................................................................. 11  
Core Component 2A ........................................................................................................................... 11  
Core Component 2B ........................................................................................................................... 12  
Core Component 2C ........................................................................................................................... 12  
Core Component 2D ........................................................................................................................... 14  
Core Component 2E ............................................................................................................................ 14  
Criterion 3. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support ........................................ 16  
Core Component 3A ........................................................................................................................... 16  
Core Component 3B ........................................................................................................................... 17  
Core Component 3C ........................................................................................................................... 20  
Core Component 3D ........................................................................................................................... 24  
Core Component 3E ............................................................................................................................ 29  
Criterion 4. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement ............................................... 31  
Core Component 4A ........................................................................................................................... 31  
Core Component 4B ........................................................................................................................... 34  
Core Component 4C ........................................................................................................................... 366  
Criterion 5. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness .................................................. 39  
Core Component 5A ........................................................................................................................... 39  
Core Component 5B ........................................................................................................................... 45  
Core Component 5C ........................................................................................................................... 47  
Core Component 5D ............................................................................................................................ 49
Introduction

Profile of the organization

The Grand Rapids Board of Education founded Grand Rapids Junior College (GRJC) in 1914 following a resolution by the University of Michigan faculty that encouraged the establishment of junior colleges in Michigan. In the 1950s and 1960s, the State of Michigan passed constitutional language and legislative acts that outlined the responsibilities of and requirements for community colleges. Under the 1966 Community College Act, Michigan included postsecondary vocational-technical education in the community college program.

In 1991, the citizens of Kent Intermediate School District (KISD) voted to redistrict GRJC, and it became Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC). For the first time, the College’s own Board of Trustees governed the College with boundaries extended beyond the Grand Rapids Public School District to include the 20 districts within the KISD.

Today, GRCC is a two-year, degree and certificate granting institution with more than 125 associate programs and 25 certificate programs. The GRCC downtown campus serves a primarily urban and commuter population, while the Lakeshore Campus, consisting of four sites located in Holland, Michigan (the Careerline Tech Center, Thompson MTEC, West Ottawa High School, and the Midtown Center), reaches a diverse rural and urban population.

During the 2011-12 academic year, GRCC enrolled more than 32,000 students in more than 5,000 classes, seminars, programs, and workshops.

The purpose of this report

As an AQIP Baldrige institution, Grand Rapids Community College is submitting several documents to support its application for continuing accreditation. These documents are available to the review team on the AQIP Baldrige Option Disk.

- Baldrige Application: *Michigan Quality Leadership Award*
- Baldrige Option Feedback Report
- AQIP Baldrige Option Catalog
- AQIP Baldrige Option Summary (this report)

This report, the *AQIP Baldrige Option Summary*, describes the College’s fulfillment of the HLC Criteria for Accreditation and provides links to supporting website resources and references or documents (available in PDF on the disk).
Criterion 1. Mission

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

Core Component 1A

The institution’s mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

Achievement of student success is at the core of the Grand Rapids Community College culture. GRCC’s Mission, Vision, Values (MVV), and Ends define the College’s culture and create the framework that shapes all college services, programs, initiatives, and partnerships.

GRCC’s MVV are visible throughout the campus and are listed clearly on the College’s website. Each year, the MVV are communicated to the faculty and staff during new employee orientation, and are continually reinforced and deployed through senior leader communications, the strategic plan, department action projects, individual action plans, wall postings throughout the College, and through additional methods. Deployment of the MVV to students, stakeholders, key suppliers, collaborators, and partners is accomplished through the College website, the distribution of the strategic plan, a variety of marketing initiatives and materials, and directly during interactions and meetings.

GRCC senior leaders strive to constantly demonstrate their commitment to the vision and values and to show others the level of that commitment through their daily actions. Senior leaders develop a strategy to pursue the vision, establish high performance expectations to lead toward realization of the vision, and reinforce what is needed through a variety of communication vehicles.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.

In 2009, with the arrival of a new president, the College determined that it was appropriate and fitting to review the current MVV and consider possible revisions. The College community embarked on a collaborative review process that included the voices of most of the faculty and staff, as well as students and stakeholders, to revise the MVV and the Ends. The process included the opportunity for every department to propose a mission statement and a series of work sessions to incorporate, review, and discuss proposals. This resulted in new guiding principles: mission statement, vision statement, set of values, and new Ends. The Board of Trustees (BOT) officially adopted the mission statement in October 2010 (the reference links to a video clip of the Board discussing the new College Mission, Vision, and Values).

2. The institution’s academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

GRCC’s Mission states that we are an open access college that prepares individuals to attain their goals and contribute to the community. This mission
implies that we ought to provide a wide range of services in order to help students attain their goals, from access to documenting how they contribute to the community including the varied educational preparation levels. According to the Michigan Quality Leadership Award (MQLA) application, workforce degree students represent 20% of our population and come to GRCC to develop the skills to meet employer job requirements; 55% of the students are transfer bound; 52% of the students are developmental and need additional skills to achieve success in college courses; and 25% of the students are workforce development and come to GRCC to retrain.

Academic programs include:

- Developmental [http://cms.grcc.edu/academicfoundations]
- Adult education [http://cms.grcc.edu/education/adult-education]
- Liberal arts [http://cms.grcc.edu/education/school-arts-and-sciences/sas-departments]
- Workforce development [http://cms.grcc.edu/education/school-workforce-development/academics/programs]
- Transfer programs [http://cms.grcc.edu/transfer]

Student support services are critical to achieve student success. They include:

- Pre-college (Upward Bound), first generation students [http://cms.grcc.edu/sss]
- Disability [http://cms.grcc.edu/disability]
- Occupational support [http://cms.grcc.edu/occupationalsupport]
- Career services [http://cms.grcc.edu/careerresources]
- Counseling/Advising [http://cms.grcc.edu/counseling]
- Experiential and service learning [http://cms.grcc.edu/servicelearning]
- Honors [http://cms.grcc.edu/honorsprogram]
- Testing [http://cms.grcc.edu/testing]
- Tutoring [http://cms.grcc.edu/tutoring]
- Student life [http://cms.grcc.edu/studentlife]
- Athletics [http://www.grcraiders.com/]
- Online learning [http://cms.grcc.edu/online]
- Library [http://cms.grcc.edu/library]
- Military and Veterans [http://cms.grcc.edu/veterans]
- Student records [http://cms.grcc.edu/registrar]
- Student conduct [http://cms.grcc.edu/studentconduct]

Enrollment reports, produced every semester, present evidence of the profile of the students that we serve. Analysis of the demographic and academic preparation of the students corroborates that the mission is being met as the institution provides access to a wide variety of students.

3. The institution’s planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.

The College’s strategic plan is the filter through which all funding requests are prioritized. The budget process begins with short- and long-term revenue and
expense projections. Inherent in the assumptions is the need to balance the budget and maintain an operating fund balance within the BOT guidelines of 10% to 15% of gross revenues, while at the same time keeping tuition costs at levels which 1) do not *de facto* lessen the College’s ability to be an open access institution for students from all socioeconomic backgrounds, 2) are in line with those of other Michigan community colleges, and 3) are significantly below those of local four-year higher education options.

All requests for new funding must identify the specific college End to which they are aligned and include specific information detailing how the request is related, what the measurable outcome(s) would be if the request were to be funded, and how it would be monitored and reported. Those requests deemed mandatory or compliance issues are automatically funded. All requests are reviewed and approved or denied by the appropriate Vice President/Executive Budget Control Officer (VP/EBCO). All approved requests are prioritized and ranked by the EBCO as being either mandatory or on a scale of 1 through 3, with 1 being the most critical to the mission of the College.

The prioritized list is then reviewed by the entire Cabinet to allow for cross-college input. The Provost and the Vice President for Finance and Administration conduct a final review and make a final recommendation to the President. Recommendations for tuition and fee adjustments to support the identified needs are also an output of this work. This comprehensive and iterative process helps to ensure that all resource allocations and reallocations are done in a thoughtful and consistent manner and align with and support the mission of the College from both the academic and administrative perspectives.

In addition, GRCC has recently enhanced the resource allocation process by developing and implementing a comprehensive budget review model. Over the past few years tax revenue and state support have declined, while expenses continue to increase. Also, student enrollment has declined from the historic highs of two years ago. Long-term projections suggested the need for possible systemic expense reductions in order to maintain financial stability and support the College. In response, the President challenged the Strategic Leadership Team to develop a comprehensive, data-driven budget review process that is aligned with the mission and that could provide inputs for longer term decisions around the allocation of resources including, when necessary, expense reductions.

The **budget review process** was piloted during the spring and summer of 2012 with 16 departments and programs across the College. The process will be improved based on learning from the pilot and will be used to review additional departments this fall. The current plan is for each department or program to complete this review process once every three years.
Core Component 1B
The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.

Grand Rapids Community College clearly articulates its Mission, Vision, Values, and Ends publicly in a variety of ways:

- Monthly Board Agendas. The Mission, Vision, Values, and Ends are printed on the back cover of all regular board meeting agendas.
- GRCC’s website: http://cms.grcc.edu/mission
- Placards are publicly posted in every building hallway, classroom, and departmental office.
- GRCC community brochures are printed and distributed at community breakfast meetings on a quarterly basis.
- Printed materials that are distributed to students and community members include:
  - Inside GRCC
  - Workforce Development Advisory Committee Handbook
  - Transfer Guide
  - Course Catalog
  - GRCC Letterhead

2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution’s emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.

GRCC’s mission documents comprise the Mission, Vision, Values, and Ends. They were revised during the 2009-10 academic year. The mission and vision emphasize that the center of our work is to serve our community through the preparation of the students who choose to attend the institution. The documents are clear as to the fact that GRCC is primarily a teaching institution. The set of values and ends provides a pathway and parameters to achieve the mission.

3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Because GRCC is a public institution in the state of Michigan, the mission documents are aligned to state law regarding the definition of the nature, scope and intended constituents, as well as for the programs and services we are allowed to provide. The Community Colleges Act of 1966 states that

“Community college’ means an educational institution providing
collegiate and non-collegiate level education primarily to individuals above the twelfth grade age level within commuting distance. The term includes an area vocational-technical education program that may result in the granting of an associate degree or other diploma or certificate, but not an educational institution or program granting baccalaureate or higher degrees.”

Core Component 1C
The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.

Over its 100-year history, GRCC has provided educational opportunities to an ever-changing and growing community. The College’s recognition of its role to educate and serve a multicultural society led to its adoption of Diversity as a central Value. This Value expresses the College’s recognition of this role: We create an inclusive learning and working environment that recognizes the value and dignity of each person. GRCC supports this Value by continuing to develop programming for its students and broader community from a multicultural perspective. The College’s philosophy is that multicultural initiatives are for the entire community and not exclusively for one group of people. One example of this is the MLK Student Program, sponsored by Student Services. GRCC actively seeks the involvement of diverse groups to participate in the event, which typically draws over 750 students from urban and suburban schools.

In addition to the MLK event, GRCC hosts many programs with a multicultural focus, including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giants Banquet</td>
<td>Honors African American leaders in the region (attendance: 800 community people)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino Youth Conference</td>
<td>Aimed at increasing success rates of regional Latino high school students (attendance: 700 HS students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLK Celebration</td>
<td>An evening community-focused celebration (attendance: 1,500 community people)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cesar E. Chavez March and Gala</td>
<td>Includes a public march and an evening gala dinner (attendance: 300+, march / 250, gala)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The goal of the Diversity Learning Center, which was endowed by a local business couple, is to contribute in the development of inquiring and knowledgeable students who will, in turn, contribute to a healthy society. The Center champions a culturally educated region, through training and programming that support college curriculum and values. It performs its role by providing cultural competence training both internally and to the broader community, as well as one of the region’s largest lecture series. In 2010-11, the Center had more than 6,000 college and community participants in its trainings and offerings.

The College also has programming targeted at the senior population, led by the work of the Older Learner Center. The main goal of the Center is to meet the educational needs of an aging society through community outreach activities, including a wide variety of educational programming, public events and forums, training of aging network professionals, publication of written materials, and dissemination of educational materials regarding successful aging.
Finally, various academic departments also address the College’s role in a multicultural society by providing educational programming through a variety of initiatives such as the Race and Ethnicity Conference, offered every two years; the annual Peace Studies Conference; the Gender Studies program; and approximately 40 student organizations. Many other opportunities are available for students, faculty, staff, and community to engage with multicultural efforts as the College seeks to provide programming that effectively and appropriately responds to its ever-evolving diverse constituents.

2. The institution’s processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

In addition to the many activities and programming efforts described above that reflect the College’s commitment to its multicultural constituencies, GRCC has established processes and activities that align with the College’s commitment to human diversity. This commitment begins with the Board of Trustees’ “Treatment of People” Executive Limitations Policy. This policy is intended to ensure that all people are treated fairly and with respect. The BOT receives an annual report on the activities related to this limitation and holds the President accountable for its implementation.

The primary purpose of GRCC’s Human Resources, Payroll, and Benefits department is to attract, develop, and engage people who are competent, committed, and dedicated to the success of our students. The department is committed to maintaining standards that comply with state and federal guidelines and as outlined within the collective bargaining agreements (Campus Police, College Employees Benefit Association, Faculty, and Educational Support Professionals) and handbooks. The staff development group also ensures that staff members are highly trained and that the work environment is conducive to learning through professional development, promoting employee enrichment, and enhancing work-group effectiveness. GRCC seeks to respond appropriately to human diversity in many ways, including over 30 different student organizations, staff recognition programs, and standing committees such as the Diversity Team.

GRCC’s attention to human diversity is also apparent in its student service programming, from Disability Support Services, which provides academic support to qualified students with documented disabilities, to its Title IX Coordinator, who is currently drafting a training plan for all necessary staff and all entering students on the basic tenets of Title IX.

The General Counsel’s Office oversees investigations of discrimination, harassment, and other possible infringements of student, faculty, and staff rights. This office also manages the Ethics Monitoring System, which has been designed to provide students, staff, and members of the community with multiple means of reporting concerns regarding possible ethics violations. The General Counsel oversees additional related policies, including Sexual Harassment, Harassment, Faculty Code of Ethics, and Conflict of Interest.

The mission of the Student Code of Conduct Office is to promote and maintain
dent-conduct/code-conduct

A civil learning environment by holding students accountable to the expectations of the College. Through the management of the Code of Conduct, we educate students in support of their success in order to foster a respectful community. GRCC expects students to be responsible, respectful, civil adults, and the Student Code of Conduct exists to help maintain the learning environment on campus.

Core Component 1D
The institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.

GRCC engages in a series of planned practices and activities during the academic year that provide the forum, context, and opportunity for its many internal and external constituencies to respond to policy decisions and challenges, and to make their views and needs heard. This commitment to open communication begins with the Board of Trustees.

http://cms.grcc.edu/boardpolicies

GRCC’s Board of Trustees, a policy governance board, has made a commitment to this governance model, as well as to the systematic review of its policies to adapt them as needed to the demands of the institution. Significant to its operating processes are the many opportunities offered to the public to address the BOT. The Board provides the space and time to listen to the public. While responses to individuals are not public, correspondence (available in the President’s office) provides evidence of this communication with constituents. The institution also provides internal stakeholders with several venues and opportunities to provide feedback for actions. Some of the venues include:

- Academic Governing Council http://cms.grcc.edu/agc
- Strategic Leadership Council http://cms.grcc.edu/slt
- Student conversations http://cms.grcc.edu/sites/default/files/attachment/Student%20Conversation%20feedback%20from%20Spring%202011.pdf

2. The institution’s educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contribution to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.

As a public institution, GRCC does not have investors or a parent organization to respond to. However, the College’s external interests are represented by the community that directly supports the institution through property taxes. Clear evidence of the primacy of the educational purpose of the institution can be found in the strategic plans, past and present. Yet another way to analyze how GRCC’s educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes is by analyzing how expenses are allocated. The following table, provided by the Financial Services Office at GRCC, provides a survey of how the institution’s budget has been allocated for the past five years (2006-07 to 2010-11) and show that instruction, instructional support, and student services receive a large proportion of the budget.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
<td>Direct costs related to the provision of instruction in the classroom, such as faculty salaries and fringe benefits, classroom supplies, printing supplies, and instructional equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Plant Services</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>Costs of operating and maintaining the College's physical environment and the safety of students, staff, and visitors to campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Support</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>Costs of the academic support structure for instructional delivery, including provost, deans, departmental support, library operations, and instructional technology support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Administration</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>Costs associated with typical non-academic administrative functions, such as the president's office, general counsel, and financial and business service functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>Costs for student support services, such as counseling, academic advising, financial aid, registrar's office, and job placement. Includes costs associated with operating a comprehensive community college, such as athletics, student clubs, and organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>Costs associated with providing software, hardware, network, and infrastructure for the instructional and administrative computing needs of the College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfers from General Fund</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>Transfers to/from other funds for deferred maintenance and capital expenditures, support for designated fund programs, support from auxiliary operations, and required college match amounts for restricted grant programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>Activities that make available to the public unique resources for the specific purpose of responding to a community need or solving a community problem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

GRCC engages with external constituencies at many different levels. The highest-level opportunity to address these needs is with the BOT. As mentioned earlier, the public is able to address the Board during its regular monthly meetings. At the institutional level, GRCC administers community surveys and at times commissions marketing studies to gather satisfaction input from its constituents. At the leadership level, the President and 100% of the Cabinet members serve in community organizations and purposefully use those opportunities to engage members and bring feedback to the institution’s leaders and departments (the list below includes some examples of this service). In addition, over 20 advisory boards (Nursing, Business, Child Development, etc.) work directly with academic departments, collaborating with faculty to develop pertinent curriculum.

- The Right Place (local economic development board), Board of Directors
- West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology, Board of Directors
- Economic Club, Board of Directors
- Village of Middleville (Local Development Finance Authority), Board of Directors
- Michigan Community Colleges Association’s Student Success Center Committee
- Michigan Region 10 Adult Learning Providers of West Michigan Board
- Michigan Community Colleges Association’s Block Transfer Committee
- Kent Career/Technical Center Hospitality Advisory Committee
- City of Grand Rapids Smartzone Local Development Financing Authority Board
- Academy for Design and Construction Council
- Essential Needs Task Force [collaborative designed to find a more seamless way to deliver services to disenfranchised people]
- Chamber of Commerce Member, Holland/Zeeland
- Michigan Community College Human Resources Association, Board Member
- Michigan Community College's Assessment group
- Center for Community Leadership executive council, council, and program committee
- Community Sustainability Partnership Steering Committee
- Kent/ Allegan Workforce Development Board
- Workpaths Advisory team with area employers, Kent Intermediate School District, and ACSET (advises GRCC on the high school student and employer needs within the community)
- Grand Rapids Public Museum Board Member
- West Michigan Literacy Council Board Member
Criterion 2. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct
The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Core Component 2A
The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

GRCC has adopted and follows the following ethical codes and policies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code/Code of Ethics</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Faculty Code of Ethics</td>
<td><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/sites/default/files/docs/policies/7-12_faculty_ethics_policy.pdf">http://cms.grcc.edu/sites/default/files/docs/policies/7-12_faculty_ethics_policy.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Administrator’s Code of Ethics</td>
<td><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/sites/default/files/docs/policies/6-21_administrator_ethics_code.pdf">http://cms.grcc.edu/sites/default/files/docs/policies/6-21_administrator_ethics_code.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Board of Trustees Member Code of Conduct</td>
<td><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/departments-navigation/service-departments/board-trustees/board-trustees-policies/board-members-code">http://cms.grcc.edu/departments-navigation/service-departments/board-trustees/board-trustees-policies/board-members-code</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conflict of Interest Policy</td>
<td><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/sites/default/files/docs/policies/6-7_conflict_of_interest.pdf">http://cms.grcc.edu/sites/default/files/docs/policies/6-7_conflict_of_interest.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GRCC follows a fair and open process in developing administrative policies, as defined in the College’s Policy on Development and Issuance of College Administrative Policies. The Faculty Code of Ethics, for example, was approved in November 2008 following a development process led by GRCC’s Academic Governing Council, comprising GRCC faculty department heads and academic administrators. The Code was communicated to faculty and staff, and, following final approval by the Provost, the policy was distributed through the College shared drive and the website, sent to the Communications Department for publication in GRCC Today, and a courtesy copy was sent to all union presidents. All policies that directly affect faculty have an effective date 45 days after the Faculty Association has been provided notice of the policy adoption or changes to existing policies.

GRCC has formalized an Ethics Monitoring System (EMS) that is publicized in the form of a printed brochure and distributed to new students and employees at their respective orientations. The EMS was designed to provide students, staff, and members of the community with multiple means of reporting concerns regarding possible ethics violations to enable the College to conduct a prompt investigation and implement a timely and appropriate response. All campus offices are encouraged to maintain copies of the EMS brochures in their reception areas.

The President’s Cabinet has established an ongoing process for monitoring ethics complaints to ensure early identification of systemic issues and an appropriate college response. A committee comprising representatives from the Office of the General Counsel, Human Resources, and Student Affairs compiles
data regarding ethics issues that arise in their respective areas. The General Counsel presents a comprehensive report to Cabinet in January and June of each year. If trends appear from the data, the General Counsel will identify the trends. The Cabinet will then determine the College response.

The policy governance model is an approach that emphasizes values, vision, empowerment of both Board and staff, and the strategic ability to lead leaders. Observing the principles of the policy governance model, the GRCC BOT crafts its values into policies of four types: Ends, Executive Limitations, Board Executive Linkage, and Governance Process. Developing policies in this way ensures that the board follows fair and ethical policies and processes. In addition, the BOT’s Code of Conduct (referenced above) specifically addresses proper use of authority and appropriate decorum in group and individual behavior when acting as Board members.

Core Component 2B
The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

GRCC presents all of the information listed through two major vehicles: the College Catalog and the College website. GRCC’s Catalog is comprehensively reviewed, updated, and printed every two years. The online Catalog is available in an interactive PDF format. GRCC is currently exploring software packages to place the catalog in an electronic format capable of being updated at any time. The College’s website is updated as needed, with individual departments and units taking responsibility for the content of their pages and the Communications and Media Relations Department taking responsibility for the overall design of the site, as well as for the home page. Because it is updated as needed, the GRCC website always contains the most current information about programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Core Component 2C
The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

GRCC’s BOT is a community-based group of seven independently elected members that provides governance oversight for the College. As elected members from the community, the BOT is autonomous. The board members have implemented several policies to ensure the autonomy and integrity of the board and its decision-making process.

1. *The governing board’s deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.*

The BOT defines which needs are to be met, for whom, and at what cost. Written with a long-term perspective, these mission-related policies (Ends) guide most of the Board's part of long-range planning.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution’s internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

The Board’s job is to represent the public in determining and demanding appropriate organizational performance. The Board meets once a month in public session. At each of the open meetings the public is given an opportunity to provide input and offer feedback to the Board relevant to the decision-making process.

3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.

The Board expects ethical conduct by itself and its members. This includes proper use of authority and appropriate decorum in group and individual behavior when acting as Board members. The BOT code states that:

1. Board members must maintain loyalty to the interests of the citizens and the College district. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups and membership on other boards or staffs. This accountability supersedes the personal interest of any Board member acting as an individual consumer of College services.

2. Board members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility. There must be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any Board member and the College except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to “inside” information.

4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

The BOT monitors executive performance by monitoring overall organizational performance related to established College goals and Ends. The President is accountable to the full Board. The Board will establish the broadest policies, delegating implementation and more detailed policy development to the President. The President is then responsible to determine the means by which the Ends will be accomplished through the work of the college faculty and staff. Faculty are ultimately in charge of academic matters, with academic policy matters taken up by the Academic Governing Council (AGC). The Academic Governing Council is made up of faculty members (department leaders, program directors, and departmental members at large) and administrative leaders. This group meets once per month during the academic year and focuses on the development of policies and procedures concerning academic and professional matters. AGC has further established a network of cross-functional teams or committees including Ethics, Sabbatical, Instructional Improvement and Professional Development (IIPD), Excellence in Education, and Deans’ Council.
The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.

Because GRCC is primarily a teaching institution, research conducted on campus most often focuses on classroom practices, the scholarship of teaching and learning, or to fulfill degree requirements. GRCC’s Institutional Review Board was established in 2009 to oversee research activities at the College.
team’s purpose is to monitor the research conducted at the College to ensure that students and personnel are treated with the respect and care outlined by the American Psychological Association guidelines for research with human subjects and to maintain the integrity of the institution.

2. **Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.**

The Library and Learning Commons (LLC) faculty librarians provide guidance in the ethical use of information resources in every instructional session taught in a classroom, in face-to-face interactions with students at the Reference Desk, from the library website, as well as in online courses within the password-protected Blackboard course management system.

Because many students lack an understanding of plagiarism and other elements of academic honesty, the topic is covered in the CLS100 First Year Experience program, along with a required information literacy component. To bolster these discussions, the LLC recently added an Academic Honesty tab to the College Learning Studies (CLS) Subject Guide. The CLS liaison librarian collaborates with CLS faculty, counselors, and the Associate Director of Student Conduct to improve and enhance these materials.

3. **The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.**

The College’s Student Code of Conduct includes an academic honesty policy. All violations of the policy are directed to the Associate Director for Student Conduct, who follows the Discipline Procedure. When a student has been charged with misconduct or an infraction of the College rules, the student is notified of the charges in writing. Following notification, the Associate Director of Student Conduct or designee will meet with the student charged. The student may have an advisor present during this conference. Pending action on the charges, the student’s status will not be altered, nor will his/her right to be present on the campus and to attend classes be suspended, except for reasons relating to the safety and/or wellbeing of other GRCC students, employees, or property. The Associate Director or designee will make the decision to suspend with regard to safety or property. The Associate Director for Student Conduct presents a summary to the Academic Governing Council every year regarding all conduct violations. A report of these violations and outcomes is available from the Student Conduct office and on its website.
Criterion 3. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support
The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Core Component 3A
The institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

GRCC degree programs are designed by faculty members, have a coherent design, and have adequate breadth, depth, continuity, progression, and synthesis of learning for the respective levels that the College is authorized to offer (certificates and associate degrees). Associate degrees include general education requirements, and these requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. The learning goals for the different degrees and certificates are consistent across all modes of delivery and locations.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

Before new courses can be offered, they are reviewed at three levels: the department offering the course, the appropriate associate dean of the school offering the course, and the College’s New Course Approval Committee. The course approval process requires the course author to address issues related to currency (such as external need, including transferability, accreditation, and community need) and related to performance levels (such as student learning outcomes, prerequisite and co-requisite knowledge, and connection to other courses and programs). GRCC courses are scheduled to be reviewed, at a minimum, every four years as part of the College’s Course Approval and Revision Process.

New programs are approved through GRCC’s New Program Development Process, which requires program authors to address issues of currency and performance levels, including graduation requirements. The currency of courses and programs, as well as the appropriateness of the levels of performance required of students, are assured by other means, where applicable, such as the transferability of courses to four-year institutions and by input from program advisory boards. Every four years, every GRCC program also undertakes Program Review, a comprehensive review of program curricula and assessment of student learning outcomes.

2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.

Consistent with its mission, GRCC offers associate’s degrees and certificate programs. For each of the associate’s degree and certificate programs, Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) have been identified. The PLOs articulate and differentiate the expected learning for each program and for the different program levels. The level of the expected learning is established on a number of
factors, including external industry and professional standards, and expectations of transfer institutions. Additionally, it is the expectation that all programs that result in a degree or certificate prepare students in each of the four GRCC Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). The expectations for the level of competency in the ILOs are determined by the faculty content experts and are based on the purpose and intent of the program.

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).

GRCC ensures that program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery in several ways. First, a common document, called a Course Approval and Revision Process (CARP), exists for all GRCC courses. The CARP governs the course, regardless of the site or modality. The CARP contains key elements, such as course description, student learning outcomes, course outline, course fit within existing programs, instructor credentials, credit hours, required textbooks, and materials.

Consistency of quality is also ensured through our faculty evaluation processes, in which evaluators review faculty members’ fidelity to CARP documents. Tenured faculty are evaluated every three years, and probationary and temporary full-time faculty are evaluated each semester for a three-year period. Beginning in 2012-13, all new adjuncts will be observed in their first semester.

Core Component 3B
The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, applications, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

GRCC believes that all students must be prepared in broad skills that both transfer to any profession or career and facilitate life-long learning. This learning begins in the context of GRCC’s general education program and is carried out through the GRCC Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) in all academic programs.

GRCC’s general education program comprises three broad areas: 1) Humanities, 2) Social Sciences, and 3) Quantitative Skills and Natural Sciences. Courses are designated as fulfilling a general education requirement if they meet the area definition. The list below includes current definitions for the areas (Note: these are currently being piloted). All GRCC programs include general education courses, including Survey of American Government, a mandatory social science requirement, English composition, and wellness courses.

| Humanities | Learning or literature concerned with human culture. A branch of study that deals with how people create the world in which they live, and how the world in which they live influences identity. Humanities is the study of the human condition in all its forms, |
including human interaction, expression, creativity, ideas, and values.

| Social Sciences | Learning and literature concerned with individual and societal relationships. A branch of science that deals with how people manage, interpret, or engage individuals, groups, institutions, societies, and cultures. Emphasis is on the factors that influence behaviors, the analysis of societal interaction, and promotion of intellectual curiosity. |
| Quantitative Skills and Natural Sciences | Learning, literature, and experimentation concerned with laws of the natural and physical world. Branches of science and mathematics that deal with how people measure, interpret, explain, define, hypothesize, analyze, research, apply, observe, and study the objects, phenomena, or laws of the natural and physical world. |

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) include the knowledge, skills, and competencies that are embedded within every aspect of the College to inspire and enhance each student’s transferable learning skills. The ILOs represent the broad categories of competence that enable students to be successful in further education, in careers, as citizens, and in their personal lives. All academic programs that lead to a degree and certificate will result in the mastery of each of the ILOs:

- **Communication Skills.** Students will effectively express and exchange ideas through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and other modes of interpersonal expression.
- **Critical Thinking Skills.** Students will be able to gather and synthesize relevant information, evaluate alternatives, and implement creative and effective solutions.
- **Social Responsibility Skills.** Students will be prepared to practice community engagement that addresses environmental responsibility, social justice, and cultural diversity.
- **Personal Responsibility Skills.** Students will become independent learners who understand and express the lifelong skills necessary for physical, social, economic, mental, and emotional health.

GRCC’s general education coursework comprises 30 credits (or approximately half) of a transferable Associate’s Degree. Associate’s degrees in Business and Associate’s degrees in Applied Arts and Sciences also contain significant general education coursework, although the percentage is not as high. These degrees are meant to prepare students for immediate entry into the workplace, and their general education requirements reflect that focus.

GRCC’s general education coursework is also accepted by all signatories of the Michigan Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers (MACRAO) Agreement as meeting the general education requirements of those State of Michigan four-year institutions (Note: some participating MACRAO schools have defined special provisos).

2. **The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and**
develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.

Grand Rapids Community College understands and appreciates the intellectual and social benefits of the liberal arts. To that end, the College administers a general education program that promotes the acquisition of knowledge, competencies, and abilities necessary to be an engaged and informed citizen. The General Education Distribution Requirement philosophy at GRCC synthesizes a range of ideas commonly promoted in higher education. Human development theories, public health goals, ideas that support the acquisition of citizenship skills, and competencies necessary for full engagement in the workforce of the 21st century have been purposefully woven throughout these requirements.

3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

The competencies of collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and developing skills adaptable to changing environments are systematically embedded in all program curricula through the four categories of the general education requirements. While general education lays the foundation for these skills and competencies, the purposeful embedding of the ILOs throughout the program curriculum reinforce and support this learning (see definitions above).

4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.

Human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work is embedded in all program curricula through the Humanities general education requirement and the Social Responsibility ILO (see definitions above).

5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution’s mission.

GRCC provides faculty with opportunities through professional development and research support to continue to build knowledge and contribute in both their specific fields and in teaching and learning. Each year, the College provides Individual Instructional Professional Development (IIPD) grants to faculty members to attend conferences and other learning experiences, to present at conferences, or to pursue scholarly interests. The College supports formal education for all faculty members with tuition reimbursement and provides faculty the opportunity for a sabbatical semester or year.

GRCC is especially proud of its activities supporting action research on teaching and learning and has involved faculty members in college-wide research on learning environments, distance learning, and the experience of faculty in their first year of teaching at GRCC. The College is involved in the
Michigan Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) group and co-hosted a recent state conference with Grand Valley State University and Ferris State University.

Faculty and students are actively involved in applying learning in the community. For example, students participate in science research, exhibit art work, perform in theater and music, give poetry readings, present on their academic service learning experiences, build Habitat for Humanity homes, and help low-income people file their income tax forms. The College also supports an Honors program for students and provides independent study and seminar experiences so students can pursue academic scholarship interests.

Core Component 3C
The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

GRCC’s hiring, budgeting, evaluation, and professional development processes ensure that the College has the academic personnel needed to offer students a quality education and to support them as needed in meeting their goals.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff, and involvement in assessment of student learning.

As of March 2012, GRCC has 269 full-time faculty members and 594 adjunct instructors. A complete list of all faculty names, titles, and academic credentials is available in the referenced report.

Although full-time faculty members have the main responsibility over curriculum matters, adjunct instructors are encouraged to participate in developing and revising courses. Full-time faculty members also establish the academic credentials for instructional staff and participate in the search teams. Extensive faculty involvement in these processes is demonstrated through committee memberships and documents. For example, Course Approval and Review Process (CARP) documents include the names of the authors of each course.

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

GRCC follows the HLC Assumed Practice that states that faculty members possess an academic degree at least one level above the level at which they teach. When faculty members are employed based on equivalent experience, the institution defines a minimum threshold of experience and an evaluation process. To this end, GRCC job postings reflect internally agreed upon credentials for the discipline, as well as the HLC Assumed Practices regarding faculty credentials. Credentials of new faculty are recorded at the time of hire, collected for all faculty, and posted on the College’s website. Furthermore, each semester, credentials of new adjunct faculty are reviewed by the Dean and are
reported at a Provost’s and Deans’ Council meeting, and recommendations for changes are made, if needed. Credentials of new full-time hires are reviewed by the Dean and approved as part of the formal hiring process, and the department and Dean make recommendations for future changes in qualifications, if needed. Credentials of all current faculty are posted annually on the Provost’s website. Any exceptions to GRCC’s hiring standards are made through a formal process based on equivalent experience and approved by the appropriate dean.

Instructors who teach in GRCC’s dual credit and contractual programs are all hired by the College and must meet the College’s hiring standards. GRCC’s consortial agreements, with the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative to offer online classes and with selected other Michigan institutions to offer a Magnetic Resonance Imaging Program, are with higher education institutions also accredited by the Higher Learning Commission; therefore, those schools are required to meet all the HLC Assumed Practices regarding faculty credentialing.

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

Faculty at Grand Rapids Community College are evaluated based on their employment status: 1) full-time tenured, 2) full-time probationary, 3) full-time temporary; 4) adjunct classroom faculty; or 5) non-classroom faculty. The Associate Deans of SAS, SWD, SSA, and ISIS work closely with the Provost’s office to track faculty compliance and submit annual compliance reports to the Provost and to Dean’s Council. All of the procedures, documents, and resources outlining this process are available on the College’s website.

---

http://cms.grcc.edu/facultyevaluation

| Full-time tenured faculty | • Evaluated on a three-year cycle.  
• Includes completion of Faculty Goals and Improvement Plan (FGIP) and self-evaluation statement during the fall semester; student evaluations of four courses pre-selected by the faculty member; optional classroom observation; completion of portfolio; portfolio meeting with Associate Dean.  
• The FGIP outlines faculty goals in five areas: teaching, college service, student service, professional development, and community service. Faculty must meet with their Associate Dean for approval of their plan. The portfolio documents achievements over the preceding three years in terms of these five areas. The self-evaluation, which outlines their efforts to meet their FGIP goals, is reviewed and discussed with their Associate Dean. |
| --- | --- |
| Full-time probationary faculty and full-time temporary faculty | • Considered probationary for three years before tenure is awarded and must complete the evaluation cycle each year until they are awarded tenure. Full-time temporary faculty are hired for one year and must complete an evaluation cycle at the end of the academic year.  
• The evaluation process is similar for both: completion of FGIP, student evaluations, classroom observations, post-classroom observation meeting with Associate Dean, completion of portfolio annually until tenure is awarded, and portfolio meeting with Associate Dean. Classroom observations and post-classroom observation meetings are |
mandatory for both faculty groups. Criteria for FGIP, self-evaluation, and portfolio are consistent with full-time tenured faculty.

| Adjunct faculty | • All newly hired adjuncts are observed in the classroom by the appropriate Associate Dean.  
• Post-classroom observation meetings are required either face to face or by email. Veteran adjunct faculty are evaluated on a rotating basis. Student evaluations must be completed by all adjunct faculty each semester. |
| Non-classroom faculty | • May also be classified as full-time tenure, full-time probationary, or full-time temporary.  
• Processes for non-classroom faculty evaluation are similar to classroom faculty, including student evaluations that are relevant to non-classroom faculty responsibilities.  
• In 2012-13, the review process for non-classroom faculty is undergoing review and possible revision. |

4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.

Grand Rapids Community College gathers necessary information from all faculty that attests to their highest degree(s) earned and other licenses or certifications necessary for documenting expertise in their disciplinary areas (e.g., licensed professional counselors, some allied health professions, etc). Processes include the requirement that candidates for employment provide transcripts from accredited institutions of higher education stating earned degrees at the time of application. Human Resources provides these transcripts to the appropriate Dean’s office for review. The associate deans of the College, under the coordination of the Office of the Provost or its designee, provide completed documentation of the currency of instructor credentials.

Through the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE), the College provides robust faculty professional development to full-time and adjunct faculty during the entire year. Further, the College has entered into memos of understanding with regional four-year institutions of higher education so that faculty professional development programming and events are shared and available among GRCC, Davenport University, Grand Valley State University, Ferris State University, and Kendall College of Art & Design. Additionally, GRCC has developed and sustained a professional development program that invites any community member interested in teaching at the College opportunities to participate in adjunct faculty institutes. These four-hour events offer a range of topics (e.g., teaching with technology, serving diverse student populations, ensuring safety in the classroom, etc.), are facilitated by full-time GRCC faculty, and are offered twice per academic semester for full-time and adjunct faculty. Participants are provided evaluation surveys and results are used to continue, improve, or discontinue the particular workshops. In addition to the data from these assessment surveys, CTE collects and applies additional information related to workshop participation and attendance (reports are available from CTE for review).

http://cms.grcc.edu/teachingexcellence
5. **Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.**

GRCC ensures that faculty are available for student inquiry through several means.

- First, the College’s contract with the Faculty Association stipulates that full-time faculty must hold a minimum of five office hours a week. Although adjunct faculty are not required by contract to hold office hours, they are strongly encouraged to do so.
- Second, the Academic Governing Council (AGC)’s Academic Standards for Faculty state that faculty are expected to 1) establish a professional relationship with students and between students and 2) create and maintain a community of learners.
- Third, the AGC Minimum Expectations for the use of Blackboard (the College’s course management system) state that: 1) By no later than the second semester of teaching, each faculty member will, at a minimum, use Blackboard to provide students with the course syllabus and faculty contact information; and 2) Use the Blackboard Grade Center to provide regular feedback (where appropriate). Each semester, when faculty do not meet the minimum standards for Blackboard usage, they are contacted by the Associate Dean for Faculty Evaluation and Hiring, who assists them with meeting expectations. Any faculty members who still fail to meet the standard have this fact noted in their evaluation files.

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

GRCC staff members providing student support services are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development. As openings occur in the areas of professional tutors, financial aid staff, counseling and advising, LLC, and student life, job descriptions accurately state the need for previous experience in those fields as well as degree requirements. An example of this is in the counseling and advising area. Counselors are required to have two years of experience in higher education counseling and advising for full-time positions. Qualified applicants must hold a minimum of a Master’s degree in Counseling for counseling positions and a minimum of a Master’s degree for advising positions. Counselors and advisors are provided a yearly professional development allotment, and additional professional development dollars are available through the College’s Instructional Improvement Fund and the Support Staff Professional Development Fund. Additionally, all GRCC counselors are required to be licensed in the state of Michigan as Professional Counselors.

Professional tutors, depending on subject tutored, must have an appropriate degree and the required amount of training. All tutors, peer and professional, attend an update meeting each semester and are eligible to receive CRLA Level I Tutor Training through the International Tutor Training Program Certification.
Financial Aid advisors are generally required to have a Bachelor’s degree or higher and/or have significant prior experience in financial services. While most of the training is on the job, staff must be familiar with federal rules and regulations. Frequent webinars and print updates from the Department of Education help keep the advisors up-to-date. Staff in this area may apply for Staff Professional Development funds to attend off campus trainings and conferences. Additionally, all employees may take advantage of on campus professional development.

Student Life staff as well as Experiential Learning staff also have Bachelor’s degrees or higher. Exceptions in Student Life are made if the candidate has significant experience and is willing to complete the bachelor’s degree. These employees, like all GRCC employees, are eligible to apply for conference funding and have access to on-campus professional development. GRCC has an expectation for all non-faculty employees to complete at least 20 hours of professional development per year. These hours are tracked and tied to the employee performance evaluation.

Core Component 3D
The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

GRCC has been working systematically to create a culture of evidence and accountability throughout all levels of programs, services, and activities. The College’s values as stated in the mission documents are the foundation for our continuous improvement efforts. Support for student learning and effective teaching is being moved to a model of data-driven decision making. These efforts have required the institution to create the appropriate infrastructure and to develop the systems to gather and analyze the data and apply these for effective decision-making.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of the student populations.

GRCC provides a wide array of student support services to meet the needs of the student populations. Services such as tutoring, counseling, advising, disability support, support for students in occupational programs, and service learning are provided free of charge.

Grand Rapids Community College has a long history of commitment to student success through tutoring and academic support. Academic Support Services at GRCC began in 1980. The college has remained committed to tutorial support and formed the Academic Support department housed in Student Affairs. Over the last 20 years, Academic Support programs have grown and adjusted to meet the needs of our changing student population. Today, there are seven subject-specific drop-in tutorial labs, a strong peer tutoring program and several targeted programs that support high-risk classes. Each of the labs is unique and offers slightly different services based on the students it serves.

The Counseling and Career Center is designed to assist students in achieving academic and personal success through informed decision-making. Services provided by counselors are confidential and free of charge to all current
students. Counselors help students clarify values, commitments, and emotional preferences; help students to understand college expectations and procedures; and make referrals to college and community resources when needed.

TRiO/Student Support Services is a program designed to work with students who are first generation college students and who meet federal income guidelines. The program has been serving students at Grand Rapids Community College for over 30 years.

GRCC's Disability Support Services provides academic support to qualified students with documented disabilities. At GRCC, every qualified student with a disability is provided:

- Equal access to educational and co-curricular programs, services, activities, and facilities available throughout the college.
- Reasonable and effective accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids, determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Confidentiality of academic and disability information, except as required by law or with the written permission of the student.

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.

GRCC has a comprehensive Academic Foundations Program, which provides developmental courses in English, Reading, Mathematics, Psychology (College and Life Success), and Computer Applications. Entering students with less than an 18 ACT score in English, Reading, and/or Mathematics are given the ACCUPLACER test to determine proper course placement. In addition, the College has two Academic Foundations counselors who support developmental students along the full continuum of the college experience, from intake through goal completion. New student orientation, tutoring labs, College Success Coaches, faculty advising, and myriad college and life success workshops supplement the developmental student experience.

3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.

Academic advising is provided to students in two ways: 1) professionally trained advisors/counselors and 2) faculty for specific academic programs. In addition, a model of academic advising entitled IDEA (imagine, develop, explore, and achieve) was created as a four-step approach to academic and career planning that can be used by students as well as advisors. The GRCC Catalog and Transfer Guide also guides students and advisors in career and course selection. Three advising centers, staffed with professional advisors/counselors serve specific populations.

Occupational and Disability Support Services provides special services and support for students in occupational curriculums who are disabled, economically disadvantaged, single parents, displaced homemakers, or who use English as a second language. Students involved in non-traditional training and
employment are also eligible for the program services. This office also provides
disability related academic accommodations for any student with a documented
disability. This office is staffed by a faculty program director, four faculty
advisors/counselors, and two support professionals. Advising for specific
occupational programs is also provided by classroom faculty. Faculty are
provided with a handbook of resources to assist with these advising efforts.

The Counseling and Career Center, described earlier, assists students in
achieving academic, career, and personal success. Students are encouraged to
meet with a counselor or advisor prior to their first semester and are encouraged
to meet at least annually to review their academic plan. At the initial meeting,
counselors and faculty advisors help students understand course placement and
plan their academic programs. Advisors and counselors assist students with
exploring possible majors, degrees, and programs of study and meeting course
prerequisites and program admission requirements. This office is staffed by a
faculty program director, 13 faculty advisors/counselors, and two support
professionals. Services are delivered on the main campus as well as the
Lakeshore Campus. Students placing into two or more developmental courses
are assigned an academic advisor.

TRiO/Student Support Services (SSS), also described earlier, is a federally
funded program that provides opportunities for academic development, assists
students with basic college requirements, and serves to motivate students
toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. This office
is staffed by a faculty program director and two advisors/counselors.

4. *The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and
resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning*
(technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance
spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the
institution’s offerings).

Grand Rapids Community College provides a complex infrastructure and
resources supporting its educational mission. The main campus in downtown
Grand Rapids includes the Spectrum Theater; the Applied Technology Center;
Main, Cook, and Sneden Classroom Buildings; the Cook Administration
Building; College Park Plaza (administration and faculty offices); White Hall
(faculty offices); a library; a music building; field house with natatorium;
student center; Bostwick Commons (pedestrian mall); the Calkins Science
Center; and two parking ramps. In addition, the Tassell Michigan Technical
Education Center (MTEC), located in Grand Rapids about three miles from the
main campus, provides training in manufacturing, auto service, and the building
and construction trades.

GRCC’s Lakeshore campus, located in Ottawa County, includes the Thompson
MTEC and four other facilities offering a full slate of learning opportunities
and environments. The College also offers instruction at other off-site facilities
and high schools throughout the Grand Rapids metropolitan area. In addition,
the GRCC Foundation owns the McCabe-Marlowe House, providing additional
meeting space and dining facilities.
All buildings provide students and staff with access to computer and information technology. GRCC strives to maintain leading edge technology in all facilities and instructional programs, and the College employs state-of-the-art applications to support business operations and administrative functions. The College’s enterprise systems infrastructure consists of four interrelated networks that cover every building on our multiple campuses: a wireline and complementary wireless data network; a standards-based voice network; a digital video network; and a network for telemetry, alarm, and control signals. The backbone of the data network is based on a ten gigabit-speed system with limited points of failure, and provides approximately 4800 10/100/1000 megabit/s ports for the college systems along with wireless coverage that provides the access to institutional information services, a state-wide library network, and internet access campus-wide. Administrative and instructional staff use commercially available applications in client-server and browser-based editions from leading vendors including Oracle/PeopleSoft, Blackboard, Novell, and Microsoft.

The Distance Learning and Instructional Technologies (DLIT) Department leads, administers, coordinates, supports, and creates opportunities for our academic community to leverage technology in teaching and learning.

The department supports faculty and assists in providing students with online learning opportunities through distance learning, as well as a wide array of instructional technologies that empower faculty and contribute to student success.

The College provides a vast array of instructional technologies for students and faculty. DLIT provides leadership, administration, coordination, and support for faculty in their use of Blackboard Learn (GRCC’s enterprise course management system), Starfish Early Alert, Camtasia Relay, Blackboard IM (Instant Messenger), Blackboard Connect, Blackboard Voice Tools, NBC Learn, Mobile Learning, and a wide assortment of other technologies related to teaching and learning.

GRCC has a wide variety of institutional processes that provide support for effective teaching and learning. Regular review cycles are embedded in these processes, such that each receives periodic reevaluation and opportunities for continued improvement. Four institutional processes determine appropriate resources and financial allocation for the teaching and learning infrastructure: 1) budget development and review, 2) information technology review, 3) curriculum review, and 4) institutional and program accreditation.

**Budget Development and Review.** GRCC’s budget development and review process provides financial structure and resources necessary to pursue institutional goals in effective teaching and learning. This process is iterative, allowing members of the campus community to submit new year and mid-year requests for budgetary support.

**Information Technology.** GRCC is committed to meeting the needs of all students, faculty, and staff by equipping and supporting the community with quality teaching and learning technology resources. These needs are developed,
reviewed, and supported through various processes. The references provide overviews for each of the following areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Request Process</th>
<th><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/information-technology/project-management/request-process">http://cms.grcc.edu/information-technology/project-management/request-process</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student and Staff</td>
<td><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/itsupport/staff-and-faculty">http://cms.grcc.edu/itsupport/staff-and-faculty</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/itsupport/students">http://cms.grcc.edu/itsupport/students</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help Desk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Software</td>
<td><a href="http://www.grcc.edu/ShowPage.cfm?PageID=14167">http://www.grcc.edu/ShowPage.cfm?PageID=14167</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request Process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Replacement</td>
<td><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/itsupport/computer-replacement-plan">http://cms.grcc.edu/itsupport/computer-replacement-plan</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Environment</td>
<td><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/LET">http://cms.grcc.edu/LET</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Media Support</td>
<td><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/classroom-technologies-support">http://cms.grcc.edu/classroom-technologies-support</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td><a href="http://cms.grcc.edu/informationtechnology">http://cms.grcc.edu/informationtechnology</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Curriculum Review.** GRCC employs recurring and overlapping processes in program development, program review, course development, and course review and revision, which are used by faculty and administrators to ensure the currency, relevance, and quality of curricular offerings, and the equipment, technology, and/or facilities necessary for delivery of these.

**Institution and Program Accreditations.** GRCC has been accredited continuously since 1917 by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA). In addition, in November 2000, GRCC was officially accepted into NCA’s Academic Quality Improvement Project (AQIP). Additionally, many GRCC academic and technical programs are accredited by external accrediting bodies. The College ensures currency and relevance of the curriculum through the site visits and both internal and external audits associated with accreditation (see the reference for a list of academic and technical programming accredited by external accrediting bodies).

5. *The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.*

The Library and Learning Commons (LLC) faculty librarians provide guidance in the effective use of research and information resources in every instructional session taught in a classroom, in face-to-face interactions with students at the reference desk, from the library website, as well as in online courses. Librarians recently transitioned and updated learning resources from a Blackboard community to a more accessible, library-based subject guide format.

Classroom faculty may request information literacy instructional sessions for particular purposes. During classes, librarians discuss how learning library skills will lead them to mastery of GRCC’s ILOs, in all four areas.

- **Communication:** Ability to find, access, and manipulate information in whatever mode it is provided.
- **Critical Thinking:** Ability to gather, synthesize, and evaluate resources for their usefulness, fairness, depth, and breadth of coverage.
- **Social Responsibility:** Ability to correctly and ethically cite information and respect the intellectual content of others.
• **Personal Responsibility**: Ability to apply the skills learned in one
library session to other courses and in future education and lifelong
learning. Ability to plan enough time to conduct quality library
research.

Core Component 3E
The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

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

GRCC’s broad array of co-curricular programs and events complements the
classroom experience and allows students an opportunity to practice and
improve their personal, social, academic, and professional skills. These
programs empower students to become active and engaged citizens at GRCC
and within our greater communities and support one of GRCC’s Ends, the
GRCC Experience. The GRCC Experience states “GRCC provides students
with co-curricular experiences that help them develop their citizenship skills.”

The College’s achievement of this End is measured in two ways: 1) by the
number of students involved in a campus organization, and 2) the percentage of
classes that offer a co-curricular component, currently defined as a service
learning component. In 2011-12, the first measure was trending up, while the
second was trending down very slightly. The following table describes some of
the co-curricular programs available. See the College’s Student Life website for
information about additional activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT INVOLVEMENT AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS</th>
<th>GRCC hosts over 40 active student organizations and partnered with area museums to offer the Go See GR! Program—a chance for over 1,600 GRCC students to visit the Public Museum and the Art Museum free of charge.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIC SERVICE LEARNING (ASL)</td>
<td>ASL programs connect students with organizations such as the Salvation Army, the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans, the Equest Center for Therapeutic Riding, Heartside Ministries, Habitat for Humanity, and the Kent County Tax Credit Coalition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATHLETICS</td>
<td>GRCC offers a wide array of men’s and women’s athletic teams that compete on a regional, state, and national level. These include men’s and women’s basketball, women’s volleyball, men’s baseball and women’s softball, men’s and women’s tennis, and men’s golf.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ACADEMIC SPONSORED CO-CURRICULAR EVENTS     | Many areas offer honors societies, speaker series, and other options for students to explore their disciplines:  
- Gamma Theta Upsilon, the International Geographic Honors Society, and Psi Beta, the Psychology Honor Society, have active GRCC chapters  
- The Psychology Department offers the annual Psychology Speakers Series  
- The Social Sciences Department hosts the annual Race & Ethnicity Conference  
- The Math Department presents the annual Math Seminar Series |
The English Department presented the Grand Rapids Poets’ Conference and a symposium entitled “Who Cares? Why Bother? Real Writing for Real People”

INTERNSHIPS

GRCC offers internships for students in many disciplines each semester including Criminal Justice, Culinary, Child Development, and Business. In 2011-12, approximately 175 students participated in community-based internships.

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

The mission of Grand Rapids Community College states that the institution is “an open-access college that prepares individuals to attain their goals and contribute to the community.” While this mission statement makes no special claims about its students’ educational experiences in terms of research, community engagement, service learning, or economic development, explicit in the College’s Vision, Values, and Ends are components of all of these, most specifically the Ends related to Community Outreach and Workforce Development. The College’s Strategic Plan, CLOs, PLOs, and ILOs are developed, evaluated, and modified to ensure their continuing applicability.
Criterion 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.

Core Component 4A
The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

The primary purpose of program review at Grand Rapids Community College is to systematically improve the educational program, curriculum, and teaching and learning. Specifically, the program profile and content are reviewed for relevance and effectiveness, and the institutional (ILOs) and program learning outcomes (PLOs) as well as the program goals are reviewed. Strengths and areas for improvement in each of these areas are identified in order to determine current needs and plan for the future direction of the program. This program review process integrates internal evaluation needs, including formative program development and strategic planning for academic programs, with the requirements for external professional standards. The following questions guide the reviews:

- Is the program mission current and viable?
- Is the current curriculum timely and relevant?
- Is progress toward program outcomes and goals being met?
- Are the program’s learning outcomes being met by students?
- Does the program have adequate resources to ensure educational quality?
- What improvements are recommended for continuous quality improvement? What resources are required to implement these recommendations?
- Is there a viable job market for the graduates of this program?
- What is the competitive and/or external environment for this program offering?

Program faculty synthesize the data associated with each of the elements using recommended strategies, determine strengths and areas for improvement, and present their findings in the Program Review Self Study Report. Action plans are created to address areas that need improving (curriculum and academic services) and planning for the future of the program. Program review is conducted every four years for each program.

2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.

Transcripts are evaluated against the requirements of the student’s chosen curriculum code, and up to 47 credits can transfer toward a degree at GRCC with grades of C- or higher. The remaining 15 academic credits must be taken at GRCC. If students have previously earned an associate’s or bachelor’s degree
from another accredited educational institution and are in a transfer curriculum code, the transcript is not evaluated, but is noted accordingly and filed. If a student has earned over 47 credits but not earned a degree and is in a transfer curriculum, an email is sent to determine the student’s intent – whether to earn a degree/MACRAO or to take classes to transfer elsewhere. Credits posted to a student’s transcript are part of the student’s permanent record and cannot be removed.

Course-to-course credit is awarded when course content is substantially equivalent to a GRCC course. Departmental credit is awarded when courses are similar but not identical. Although credits earned at other colleges for specific courses may be less than those required for specific GRCC courses, full course credit is awarded on these transfers, with a few exceptions. General elective credit is awarded for course material completed at other accredited educational institutions that is not equivalent to any specific GRCC course. Specialty courses (such as Health and Dental) may be evaluated by the respective departments. Department evaluations may also be requested for specific courses in other specialty fields as necessary.

The following list describes the transcript evaluation processes for non-traditional, experiential, military, and other forms of learning.

- **Foreign Transcripts**. Students are required to provide an official transcript along with a certified English translation of the transcript to one of the approved foreign accredited educational evaluation services.

- **Global Education/Study**. Arrangements for Study Away organized through agencies such as American Institute of Foreign Study (AIFS) or International Studies Abroad (ISA) may qualify for transfer credit.

- **Military Credit**. Students must submit an official transcript from the applicable branch of service directly to Student Records/Registrar. Students who complete basic military training may be granted two Wellness credits.

- **AP/CLEP Test Credit**. Students who have earned Advanced Placement or CLEP credit from The American College Board through their previous high school or college must request an official transcript of their test scores mailed directly to GRCC to be considered for transfer. Scores must meet GRCC standards.

- **Challenge Examinations**. Challenge examinations are GRCC faculty-developed and scored tests. Course specific credit is granted for these subject-level examinations.

- **ACT PEP/DANTES/Excelsior College Examinations**. An official transcript is required to receive credit. Minimum passing scores vary by subject.

- **Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)**. The American Council on Education’s (ACE) Commission on Educational Credit and Credentials has recommended that credit be granted to those technicians who have passed ASE certification tests and have the required work experience.

- **American Council on Education (ACE)**. Educational credit is granted for extra-institutional learning and training programs through participating organizations, associations, businesses, government, industry, military, or union affiliations. Students who successfully complete a training course must submit the required forms, signed by the participating organization’s designated education representative, to the ACE Registry. Upon receipt of an official ACE transcript, GRCC will award credit based upon ACE recommendations.
Child Development Associate Credential (CDA). GRCC recognizes the CDA Credential by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition when earned through non-credit-bearing training, and by departmental evaluation-granted credit for CD 105, Foundations of Early Childhood Education (3 credits).

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA). GRCC offers credit for prior learning experiences that equate to courses taught at GRCC in the technology area.

Articulation. The amount of articulation credit available depends on the specific program and varies from two to 16 credits. If a student transfers to another college after attending GRCC, he/she should check with the transfer college about the eligibility of the articulation credits for transfer.

High School to Credit. Students who successfully complete “articulated” career and technical education programs in approved secondary schools will be granted college credit for specific courses, subject to articulation policies and procedures.

Non-Credit to Credit. Students who successfully complete “articulated” career and technical education programs in approved GRCC non-credit courses will be granted college credit for specific courses, subject to published articulation policies and procedures.

3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

Grand Rapids Community College requires students to complete at least 15 credits of academic course work at GRCC in order to be awarded an associate’s degree. Up to 47 credits may be transferred to GRCC as credit by examination or evaluation below the 400-level (above 400-level by exception only), according to the following guidelines: Transfer credit is awarded for courses with grades of “C-” or higher from all institutions that are recognized by the Department of Education or that are regionally or nationally accredited and listed with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

At GRCC, authority for course prerequisites, course rigor, and expectations for student learning at all levels are the provenance of the faculty. Department faculty are responsible for course creation, revision, and assessment. ILOs, GLOs, and PLOs are similarly formulated and assessed by appropriate faculty. The role of administration is to ensure that new courses and programs and the revision and assessment of existing courses and programs meet HLC expectations.

GRCC maintains authority over its learning resources through the various units that deliver those resources and through institutional committees that oversee and monitor the resources that are provided by outside vendors. For example, GRCC’s Library and Learning Commons is a unit of the College, led by a GRCC-employed director and run by GRCC faculty and staff. GRCC contracts with the Follett Group to manage its bookstore, and a bookstore oversight team...
comprising academic administrators and faculty ensures that Follett meets the needs of the students and faculty. Similarly, GRCC contracts with Blackboard to use its course management system, but academic administration and faculty ensure that the system continues to meet the needs of students and faculty through various channels, including the Distance Learning Faculty Advisory Group.

Faculty qualifications are determined by faculty within departments. The role of the administration is to ensure that they are in keeping with HLC expectations, as well as other professional accreditation expectations. Instructors who teach in GRCC’s dual credit and contractual programs are all hired by the College and must meet the College’s hiring standards. All courses that are taught to dual-enrolled high school students are GRCC courses offered and taught by GRCC faculty. There are no GRCC courses offered at local high schools that are not offered on our own campuses. GRCC faculty who teach at high school sites are evaluated in the same manner as any other GRCC faculty member. The vast majority of GRCC faculty who teach at high school sites also teach on GRCC’s campuses.

5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

As a two-year institution offering degrees in a number of specialized fields, GRCC is not only institutionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, but also receives specialized programmatic accreditations for many of its programs.

6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and AmeriCorps).

The GRCC Indicator Report documents and demonstrates the status of those indicators the Board has selected to monitor for each of the six college Ends including Student Success. The report provides updated performance levels for each of the Indicators of Success (IOS), historical data reaching back five years, benchmark data, and targets. The data contained in the report are tracked by the relevant Ends Committee of the Strategic Leadership Team.

Core Component 4B
The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

GRCC assesses student learning in academic and student service programs, training programs, and courses in order to ensure effective learning and to promote and facilitate continuous curricular and pedagogical improvement. Assessment of student learning focuses on using valid direct and indirect data collection measures to drive curricular development aimed at improving student
The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

GRCC’s outcomes-based curriculum model applies measurable student learning outcomes at the institutional, program, and course levels, enabling faculty to assess student learning at each level. Clear processes have been established for assessing student learning annually. The assessment process steps are:

1. Identify the outcome(s) to assess
2. Decide how you will measure outcome(s)
   a. Develop/purchase instrument (if needed)
   b. Collect data
3. Analyze data and draw inferences. Decide whether changes or improvements to the curriculum and/or teaching strategies are warranted in order to improve student learning.
4. Make changes
5. Collect data
6. Analyze data and draw inferences. Decide whether changes or improvements to the curriculum and/or teaching strategies improved student learning
7. Repeat

Each year, faculty may measure multiple CLOs, PLOs, and ILOs or may focus on selected competencies associated with a particular outcome. This decision is made based on the data and information needed to best inform program and curricular development. The progress and findings associated with the annual assessment are reported at the end of each academic year. GRCC recently subscribed to WEAVEonline to warehouse the Assessment of Student Learning information and findings and to generate reports. The transition to WEAVEonline will occur over the 2012-13 and 2013-14 academic years.

The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for each academic and student service program define the goals for learning. Appropriate assessments determine the extent to which students are mastering the outcomes and identify areas for curricular and pedagogical improvement. Complementing the PLOs, the GRCC Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) also define co- and cross-curricular objectives in the four areas of Communication, Critical Thinking, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility.

The 2011-12 assessment projects for all programs are listed on the GRCC Assessment of Student Learning web page. Annually, every GRCC program identifies an assessment project that includes assessment of at least one PLO and one ILO. Faculty are responsible for identifying or creating measurement instruments that reflect the contextual learning appropriate for the courses and programs in which they teach. A general rubric has been created to help guide faculty in the development of such instruments.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

A vital component of the assessment process is the requirement to develop action plans for improvement. The assessment cycle is not considered complete until a curricular or pedagogical improvement or change has been made and subsequently student learning has been measured to see if the change resulted in increased student learning.

4. The institution’s processes and technologies to assess student learning reflect good practices, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Program faculty, with their deans, associate deans, department heads, and program directors, are responsible for carrying out the program review and assessment of student learning processes. Faculty, who are content experts in their respective disciplines and fields, write the PLOs for the academic and student service programs in conjunction with program leadership. They are then responsible for carrying out the full assessment and review processes for the program.

In addition to the substantial contributions that faculty members make by carrying out the program review and assessment of learning processes in their disciplines, they also contribute to the institutional work in this area. Faculty members serve on the Curriculum Team and were instrumental in the development of GRCC’s ILOs and definitions for general education distribution requirements. Finally, all policy decisions require approval from the GRCC Academic Governing Council (AGC), a collaborative initiative between faculty and academic administration created to strengthen communication and increase involvement in academic issues and policies.

The Associate Provost oversees the academic processes of program review and assessment of student learning, with support from the Curriculum Team and Curriculum Specialist. GRCC’s recent purchase of WEAVEonline will help to maintain the fidelity of the assessment processes and allow the institution to track and document all institutional assessment efforts systematically.

Core Component 4C
The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to the missions, student population, and educational offerings.

Indicators for student retention, persistence, and completion are part of the monitoring system established to track progress on the Ends in the area of Student Success. Reasonable, attainable targets for these indicators have been determined by the Student Success sub-team of the Strategic Leadership Team using comparative data, past performance, and the status of current interventions.
Specifically, the College tracks the following retention, persistence, and completion indicators in the *Indicator Report* as well as other key campus reports, such as the *Fall Enrollment Report*:

- Percent of students who successfully transfer to another college / university (within three years)
- Percent of students who successfully transfer or complete a degree or certificate (within six years)
- Three-year completion rate for first-time, full-time students
- Fall-to-fall retention rate for first-time students
- Fall-to-winter persistence rate for all students (full- and part-time)
- Course success rates (% of A-C grades)
- Student performance at transfer colleges

2. *The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs*

Collecting and analyzing student retention, persistence, and completion data is primarily the responsibility of the Institutional Research and Planning Office. These data are compiled and disseminated as they become available, typically immediately following a major semester. These data are also reported on the College Dashboard and the Indicator of Success (IoS) report. Data are also disaggregated by a variety of sub-groups as appropriate. Deans, department leaders, and faculty members can also request additional data reports and analysis, beyond those that are regularly provided.

3. *The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.*

GRCC’s academic program review process has unique assessment criteria for workforce education programs and developmental and transfer programs. These criteria allow the two types of programs to assess their success with student retention, persistence, and program completion using appropriate measures and to identify strategies to increase student success rates.

Data collected and analyzed for workforce development programs include:

- Percentage of students who receive a credential, degree, or certificate
- Percentage who remained enrolled in their original postsecondary institution or transferred to another two- or four-year postsecondary institution during the reporting year and who were enrolled in postsecondary education in the fall of the previous reporting year
- Number of graduates and graduation rates

Data collected and analyzed for developmental and transfer programs focus on course success rates, by department. Faculty use these data to evaluate how course pass rates reflect student success, the success of transfer students in meeting course and department expectations, and how well the program serves the diverse student population.

After faculty members in programs analyze either 1) their retention and
completion data (workforce education programs) or 2) course success data (developmental and transfer programs), they create improvement plans for any area that needs action. This action plan is reported in their academic program review report and progress is evaluated yearly.

4. The institution’s processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice.

Research on retention and completion of programs begins by identifying new students in the fall (including those who took courses in the previous summer for the first time). For consistency, GRCC always starts with new students in degree-seeking programs who have the intention of obtaining a certificate, associate's degree, or transferring to another college within three years (150% time frame). Exclusions include dual-enrolled high school students, students in non-degree-seeking programs, and students on wait lists for health programs. Students are flagged as 1F (first-year starter) in the database and each student's demographics are downloaded and stored in Excel files for future use and comparisons. For persistence, all students’ data are downloaded and stored in term folders for future comparisons. Data are stored on a college internal drive, protected with firewalls, and backed up regularly.

Once students are identified, they are matched with future enrollment data by unique IDs to determine whether they are enrolled in the next winter term (fall-to-winter retention) and the following fall term (year-to-year retention). Fall-to-winter retention rates hover around 75-80%; fall-to-fall persistence rates for all students hover around 50%. If rates are different, attempts are made to analyze causes. Oftentimes, a certain cohort will excel or struggle, changing the rates and the outcomes; sometimes market conditions play into the outcomes. Similar analyses occur in matching students who obtain a degree or transfer within one, two, and three years.
Criterion 5. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

Core Component 5A

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

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

Grand Rapids Community College has worked diligently over the past several years to align human, fiscal and infrastructure resource allocation in support of the strategic plan to achieve the Mission, Vision, Values, and Ends. The alignment helps to ensure that the College has sufficient resources to support instructional programming, student services, business and general operations.

The annual resource request process identifies areas where additional resources are requested; the connection of those requests to the strategic plan; and/or the risk for existing programs and services without additional resources. Requests are reviewed and prioritized by Executive Budget Control Officers. The full list of prioritized requests is reviewed by the President’s Cabinet and allocation recommendations are made.

In addition to the annual resource request process, the following points demonstrate our commitment to maintaining the financial stability of the College and assuring adequate resources are available:

- Financial resources were set aside to fund College Action Projects identified in the Strategic Plan. These funds must be requested, and a subcommittee of the Strategic Leadership Team reviews and approves requests.
- A budget stabilization fund (designated fund) was established in July 2011 to allow the College to set aside additional resources for future use. These reserves are designed to provide a funding source for one-time expenses, as well as to guard against mid-year revenue declines due to enrollment fluctuations or other unanticipated changes.
- A college-wide budget review process, developed by a sub-team of the College’s Strategic Leadership team, was piloted in spring and summer of 2012 with 16 departments. Full implementation begins in 2012-13.
- The College continues to maintain a fund balance of no less than 10% of general fund expenses.

GRCC’s hiring and professional development processes support the identification and selection of highly qualified faculty and staff. The following points further demonstrate the College’s dedication towards
ensuring that we have adequate human resources in place to support operations:

- College Action project 5.2.2 focused on improving the adjunct experience to better prepare and equip our adjunct faculty.
- GRCC requires faculty to complete an internal certification process prior to teaching an online course.
- The Center for Teaching Excellence offers numerous professional development opportunities to support faculty, including organized faculty learning days for full-time and adjunct faculty.
- The College’s professional development and performance review processes are currently being revised to better align with new pay-for-performance structures and the College’s strategic plan.

The College has dedicated resources for physical plant infrastructure maintenance and enhancement. The College’s comprehensive financial plan will bring current facilities up to acceptable maintenance standards, and, once there, will provide a dedicated funding stream sufficient to maintain physical structures and increase preventative maintenance.

The following points also illustrate the College’s commitment to the learning environment and physical plant:

- A documented deferred maintenance plan exists for each facility on campus and has been updated several times.
- The College recently issued approximately $28 million in bonds to fund projects that will address infrastructure needs over the next three years.
- The College recently completed a $15 million capital campaign (private fundraising) that supported complete renovation of White Hall for faculty offices and meeting spaces. The project earned LEED certification.
- GRCC was awarded a matching grant of $5 million from the State of Michigan to help fund a full renovation of Cook Academic Hall. A capital outlay report, including assessment of all campus facilities, was required as part of the funding request. The College is submitting a new capital outlay request in 2012.

Finally, GRCC strives to maintain leading edge technology in all our facilities and instructional programs, and we employ state-of-the-art applications to support our business operations and administrative functions. Our objective is to maximize the amount of institutional data and information that are available online. The GRCC Information Technology (IT) architecture is the basis by which we accomplish this objective for faculty and staff, partners, students, and stakeholders. The following points further illustrate the College’s commitment to ensuring that adequate technological resources exist to support operations wherever and however programs are delivered:

- The architecture permits data and information accessibility from anywhere on campus via the College network, College web pages, and the Campus Wide Information System (CWIS). The architecture of our CWIS allows users to access appropriate information as defined by
their user profile 24/7.

- The wireless network canopy covers 100% of the campus, allowing students, stakeholders, suppliers, partners, and collaborators to access the Internet for appropriate data and information.
- Our online learning management system is available 24/7 for faculty and students.
- The Lakeshore and DeVos campuses are connected to the main campus via fiber to provide the same access to data and information that stakeholders have on the main campus.
- We are implementing a VDI (virtual desktop infrastructure) to provide remote access to core systems while faculty and staff are off campus.

2. The institution’s resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.

The College uses a rolling budget methodology that ensures that line item budgets will automatically carry over into successive fiscal years, unless 1) increased through an approved allocation, or 2) reduced through a mandated reduction. Budget Control Officers (BCOs) have the latitude to transfer (reallocating) only non-salary and fringe budget allocations within and among the cost centers under their purview, and all such transfers are subject to VP/EBCO oversight. This oversight process prevents any arbitrary elective allocation of financial resources to other areas or programs within the institution.

Annually, all college programs and departments review expenses and have the opportunity to request additional resources. When additional funding is desired, BCOs complete the initial request forms and submit them to the appropriate VP/EBCO for review. If approved, the requests are subject to the prioritization and iterative review process described previously (see Criterion 1.A.3). Similarly, funding for staffing, including filling existing, vacant positions, is initiated by the BCO using a Position Authorization Form (PAF). Each PAF request requires a written justification/rationale for the action and requires approval by the VP/EBCO and President. As with budget requests, the entire Cabinet reviews all PAFs prior to approval to solicit cross-college input.

Finally, community colleges in Michigan operate as independent units, with their own locally elected governing boards and are not subject to a “super-ordinate entity” (as in states having a community college system structure). However, Michigan community colleges do face the risk of unanticipated enrollment declines resulting in loss of tuition revenue, or loss of state revenue allocations during the fiscal year as a result of Executive Order reductions. In order to mitigate the impact of such vicissitudes, the College has developed a Budget Stabilization Fund, an amount equal to one to two percent of total expenditures, above the traditional fund balance, which is set aside specifically to offset any unplanned revenue reductions. This Fund helps to ensure that educational programs are not adversely impacted during the middle of a school year.

3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution’s organization, resources, and opportunities.
Organization

Achieving the goals implicit in the College mission and Ends requires a campus-wide effort. The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) was created to ensure that the College Mission, Vision, Values, and Ends are accomplished. The SLT consists of three categories of campus leaders totaling 80 members: team leaders from 15 cross-functional teams, including the AGC, Dean’s Council, Diversity Team, and Career Development Team; 36 department leaders, including the President’s Office and the Provost; 26 leaders of various employee groups, including faculty and all levels of administration; three student leaders; and one Board liaison. The purpose of the SLT is to provide a forum enabling a wide variety of College constituency groups the opportunity to provide input into the future direction of the College. The SLT conducts the Strategic Planning process, guiding the development and on-going communication of the plan; reviews performance results and benchmarking data; studies budget realities; and offers recommendations to the President.

The SLT is composed of an Executive Committee and six standing committees (one for each of the Ends) and conducts much of its work in committee work sessions. The SLT began development of the current three-year strategic plan (July 2011-June 2014) in October 2010 and used monthly work sessions to complete the project. Initially, the SLT reviewed the newly created Mission, Vision, Values, and Ends and identified alignment requirements and a framework for the plan. These included the key components of the plan: Strategies, College Action Projects, Department Action Projects, and Indicators of Success.

Resources

Achieving the goals implicit in the College’s mission may, at times, require resources above those dedicated to ongoing operations; thus, GRCC’s regular budget process includes a means for allocating resources specifically to meet special needs. Beginning in 2011-12, the College’s designated fund group included a Strategic Leadership Team Initiatives Fund of $250,000 (i.e., separate from the general operating fund). The Initiatives Fund was established from revenue increases as well as expense reductions and other efficiencies. These funds are allocated through a competitive process administered by a sub-committee of the Strategic Leadership Team. Project “champions” present College Action Projects (CAPs), written requests reflecting goals of the College’s mission and the strategic plan, for one-time allocations of up to $20,000. In the last fiscal year, approximately $180,000 was allocated to support various CAPs. The success of this process has led the College President to commit to continue this resource. The 2012-13 budget includes a general fund transfer to replenish the Initiatives Fund. In addition to this commitment, a concerted effort has been made to seek external grant support where available. One example is the five-year, $2 million Title III federal grant awarded to GRCC to improve retention and academic success among high-risk student populations.

Opportunities

Opportunities to change the Strategic Plan are built into the Strategic Planning process. CAPs can be modified by the champion (action project leader) at any point by altering the SLT sub-team responsible for the project. The Board
Monitoring Report (BMR) process also provides the opportunity for discussion and mid-course corrections depending on progress and changes in the environment and ensures that a full-blown review of every CAP is brought before the SLT and the Board for an in-depth discussion of actions taken twice per year. SLT uses this opportunity to ensure that the plans to support the CAP are on track and direct modifications as needed. The BMR is also used for an SLT review of the Dashboard and all CAP Indicators of Success (IOS). If lagging performance is indicated, the SLT focuses its attention in those areas and directs modified actions as necessary. In addition, information is constantly provided to SLT from other means that may cause a new plan to be established. This information could come from the many established “listening posts” or from various data collection sources. The College has demonstrated the will to make changes where needed and developed processes to ensure long-term success.

4. The institution’s staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.

GRCC’s comprehensive screening and hiring process for staff positions is designed to determine if applicants, and ultimately new hires, are appropriately qualified for their positions. The steps of the screening and hiring process begin with an accurate job description for new or relisted positions. To support its commitment to a diverse and inclusive work force and learning environment, GRCC follows a standardized and comprehensive recruitment and hiring process. The following are features of the process that ensure appropriate qualifications for all new hires:

• A Selection Activity Appointment Record (SAAR) documents the hiring process, keeps leadership informed, records rationale for decisions, ensures consistent practices, and maintains EEO compliance.
• Screening committees, trained by the HR Generalists, provide expertise and a varied perspective to inform the executive team’s decision regarding the best candidates. The College’s Executive Leadership is accountable and responsible for all final hiring.
• HR generalists guide screening committees as they review applications, meet applicants, recommend final candidates, complete second round interviews, and make final recommendations to the appropriate vice president.
• Upon final approval and completion of reference and background checks, HR makes the job offer. Upon acceptance, orientation and on-boarding are coordinated through HR and Staff Development.

GRCC is committed to training and developing staff for current and future positions. Professional development is supported in many ways, including the following:

• Staff Development Office resources include three full-time positions and an annual budget (currently at $290,000) to cover staff development facilitators, external facilitators, orientation, on-boarding, the Leadership Institute, employee recognition rewards, and development events, as well as a commitment to employee wellness. Development activities include traditional classroom activities as well as online options, and can be requested by individuals, departments, or cross-campus groups.
• Each staff collective bargaining agreement and the non-union handbook
contain a commitment to professional development. GRCC’s institutional goal for staff is a minimum of 20 hours of professional development per year. In fiscal year 2012, the average was 19.25 hours.

5. **The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.**

As discussed in Criteria 1.A.3 and 5.A.2, the College has long employed a collaborative budget process designed to link budgeting with the Mission, Ends, and Strategic Plan. Budget Control Officers (BCOs) initiate requests for additional funding, including funding for new staffing and space modifications. These are reviewed and, if approved, prioritized by the appropriate Vice President/Executive Budget Control Officer (VP/EBCO). Key inputs into this process are 1) the degree of alignment to a college End, 2) the existence of a measurable outcome, and 3) a plan to measure it. Requests not related to an End are also considered, with appropriate justification. Examples might include a vendor price increase, an enrollment-driven increase in the demand for a department’s services, or funding to implement a departmental goal. Approved requests are prioritized as being either “mandatory” (such as a vendor price increase) or on a scale of 1 through 3, with 1 being the most critical to the mission of the College. The entire Cabinet reviews this prioritization to allow for cross-college input in light of projected available resources, including tuition and fee adjustments. Using that input, the Provost and the Vice President for Finance and Administration perform a final review and make recommendations to the President. The final budget document, including budgets for all college funds, is presented to the BOT for formal adoption.

In addition to the original budget adopted in June of each year, a mid-year, or amended, budget is prepared and submitted to the BOT for formal approval in February. While the process is similar to the preparation of the annual budget, the criteria for new allocations are more stringent. The mid-year budget is intended primarily to reflect only those changes occurring since the original budget was prepared, such as enrollment variances, relevant legislative action (including state funding adjustments), updated salary (such as contract settlements), and/or benefit costs and mandatory expenses unforeseen in the original budget.

Monitoring of individual department budgets is the responsibility of the BCO. Budget vs. actual reports are available online and are updated weekly throughout the fiscal year. In addition, the finance office sends email notifications to BCOs when departmental budgets are, in total, within $2,500 of being fully expended. BCOs have the latitude to transfer or reallocate non-salary and fringe budget allocations within and among the cost centers under their purview to make up for deficiencies in individual line items. On a monthly basis, the Cabinet reviews, and the BOT approves, summary financial statements with budget-to-actual comparisons. At the end of each fiscal year, the budget vs. actual performance of each department is summarized, and departments are presented with five-year trend data to assist them in analyzing spending patterns and making necessary adjustments. This information is also made available to the President, the EBCOs, and other Cabinet members.
Over the past three fiscal years, renewed emphasis on adherence to budget parameters has yielded measurable improvement. Since 2008-09, the number of departments that ended the year with negative budget variances has declined by nearly 58%. In the aggregate, general fund budget savings have provided additional resources for deferred maintenance, technology enhancements, a budget stabilization fund, and other college-wide initiatives.

Core Component 5B
The institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies – including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students – in the institution’s governance.

Grand Rapids Community College’s organizational structure and governance system promotes leadership accountability, collaboration in executing the mission, decision-making at the point of service, a focus on the future, and high performance. The key leadership teams that comprise the governance system are these:

- **Board of Trustees (Board).** The Board is a community-based group of seven independently elected members that provides governance oversight for the College. The President participates, facilitates, and collaborates with the Board in an ex-officio capacity and provides the link to the College administrative team and all College operations. The President reports to the Board, which ensures management and fiscal accountability for the organization’s actions through a Policy Governance approach that includes Executive Limitations, a Governance Process, and Board–President Relations.

- **President’s Leadership Team (PLT).** PLT is a team consisting of the President and Vice Presidents. The PLT meets weekly the first three weeks of each month in conjunction with Cabinet to provide a free flow of ideas pertaining to College performance, policy, and improvement priorities. The PLT meets separately the last week of the month to discuss strategic institutional decisions and to monitor and serve as a resource on personnel and compensation issues, including contract negotiations.

- **President’s Cabinet (Cabinet).** Cabinet is a 16-member body composed of administrative leaders from both the academic and operational sides of the College. Cabinet meets weekly the first three weeks of each month focusing on the development and ongoing management of operations, including review of Ends monitoring reports and budgeting.

- **Strategic Leadership Team (SLT).** SLT guides development and ongoing implementation of the strategic plan, reviews performance relative to the plan, assesses budget realities, and recommends budget priorities. It is composed of 80 people representing a broad spectrum of the College community, including the Board and students.

- **Academic Governing Council (AGC).** AGC is made up of faculty members (department leaders, program directors, and departmental members at large) and administrative leaders. This group meets once a
AGC has further established a network of cross-functional teams or committees including Ethics, Sabbatical, Instructional Improvement and Professional Development (IIPD), Excellence in Education, and Deans’ Council.

- **Suppliers and Partners** - Partners, collaborators, and suppliers are important to the College for four reasons: 1) partners are generally directly involved in delivering services to students and stakeholders; 2) GRCC devotes substantial time and effort working with partners and collaborators to achieve short- or long-term objectives; 3) the products and services can directly impact the quality of GRCC educational programs and our effectiveness in delivering that education; and 4) non-labor expenses represent a significant component of the College’s costs. For these reasons, the College has established a large number of partnerships and collaborations and identified key suppliers of vital products and services.

**2. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight for the institution’s financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.**

The BOT meets monthly in both regular meetings and board retreats to monitor the Ends, the financial condition, and academic policies and practices ensuring that the institution’s legal and fiduciary responsibilities are met.

**3. The institution enables the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative efforts.**

GRCC has established a structured system to provide opportunities for the staff, students, and faculty to be involved in the creation of policies and procedures as well as academic requirements as appropriate. The system includes decision-making bodies (Board of Trustees, President’s Cabinet, Academic Governing Council, Strategic Leadership Team), advisory groups (Strategic Leadership Team, Student Congress) and operational teams (Deans’ Council, Master/Space Planning Team, Diversity Team, Policy Advisory Team, Supplier Diversity Team, CARP Team, Student Feedback Management Team, Behavioral Intervention Team, etc.). The scope of work of each team varies and is established in their respective team charter documents. In addition to these decision-making bodies, all CAPs and departmental action projects provide staff and faculty opportunities to contribute to the development and implementation of practices and activities.

Opportunities for providing input and varied perspectives are supported by an extensive communications system that fosters collaboration, including:

- BOT has open comment items at each meeting
- President’s Cabinet receives presentations as requested by campus members
- AGC and Deans’ Council include permanent guests from non-academic areas
Student Congress allows a dean representation at their meetings who acts as liaison.

In addition to these channels, GRCC maintains regular, daily communication modes that also provide opportunities for feedback and input, including 1) GRCC Today, a college-wide online blog that posts items from different offices and departments; and 2) the Academic Leadership Meetings Comprehensive Calendar, maintained and updated weekly by the Provost’s office, providing a schedule and agenda for the meetings of the Strategic Leadership Team, Academic Governing Council, Deans’ Council, as well as the Provost’s direct staff. The Provost encourages faculty and staff to provide input and feedback through monthly updates.

Core Component 5C
The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.

GRCC allocates its resources to align with the mission and college priorities as outlined in our Strategic Plan. Financial resource needs are fed into the budget process. As the proposed budget is developed, funding requests to support the CAPs are flagged to show the personnel costs needed, as well as all other costs associated with the project. In that way, the resource impact of each CAP is fully understood as budget discussions are held, and it can be balanced against the resources needed to meet day-to-day obligations.

As budget decisions are made, priority consideration is given to CAP-related requests to ensure that all, or at least the high priority CAPs, are resourced. If a CAP is unable to be funded due to budget limitations, it may be placed in “long-term” status. It will always be considered for supplemental funding in December of the plan year, when excess funds often become available if tuition revenue exceeds the forecasted conservative budget amounts. Since budgets have been cut to historically low levels due to statewide funding shortages, it has been very difficult to fund new initiatives. For 2011-12, $250K was allocated for CAPs that were underfunded in the budget process. Champions applied for those funds and a subcommittee of the SLT evaluated requests and made decisions.

2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

As described earlier, academic programs are scheduled to complete an Academic Program Review every four years. Within this process, they report on their assessment of student learning projects, and they evaluate their operations, plans, and budget in light of supporting student achievement of outcomes and student success. In the other three years, the programs complete a year-end report in which they report on assessment of student learning projects, document accomplishment of goals, and set goals for the next year. In both of these processes, student learning outcomes assessments are linked with all the other work of the program. Typically, the results of student learning assessment lead
to changes in instructional strategies. Sometimes, these changes might require professional development or different teaching materials that could have some budgetary impact. The Program Review process would identify that need and a budget request would follow. Academic programs/departments also complete a budget review process documenting how the department supports student success. Programs’ assessment of student learning outcomes is included in the data that are shared in the budget review process.

3. **The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.**

The Strategic Planning System (SPS) has undergone cycles of improvement for more than ten years and was redesigned in 2009 as part of the leadership assessment and within the revision process of the College’s MVV and Ends. One result of this assessment process was the formation of the SLT to provide broader involvement of the campus leadership in developing long-term strategy, to integrate the Ends into strategy development such that they became the driving force of strategy, measurement, and work system design; and to enhance the environmental scanning approach such that it became a continuous, year-long process of gathering and updating data. The purpose of the SLT is to provide a wide variety of College constituency groups with the opportunity to provide input into the future direction of the College. The diagram below presents a snapshot of this process.

4. **The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution’s sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.**
As described earlier, the College’s strategic plan is the filter through which all funding requests are prioritized. The budget process begins with short- and long-term revenue and expense projections, based on the need to balance the budget and maintain an operating fund balance within 10% to 15% of gross revenues. The budget planning process also includes preparation of a mid-year, or amended, budget that reflects only those changes occurring since the original budget was prepared, such as enrollment variances, relevant legislative action (including state funding adjustments), updated salary (such as contract settlements), and/or benefit costs and mandatory expenses unforeseen in the original budget.

5. **Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalizations.**

The diagram presented above illustrates the function of key environmental scanning elements in the College’s planning system. The scanning data are compiled by IRP throughout the year and provide the necessary insight for the SLT to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the current plan. The table below summarizes the key environmental data sources. As significant updates to the scanning data appear throughout the year, they are provided to the SLT for potential modification of the plan prior to the next planning cycle as necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCANNING ELEMENTS</th>
<th>DATA SOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology shifts</td>
<td>Technology associations, publications, websites, benchmarking, IT research, technology suppliers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education programs and services</td>
<td>Advisory Committees, websites, regional workforce trends, K-12 and transfer schools, publications, benchmarks, education associations, program reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student &amp; community demographics</td>
<td>Multi-county demographic trends, local and national census data, feeder school trends, internal data tracking, partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student &amp; stakeholder preferences</td>
<td>VOC methods, meetings and interactions with students, surveys, focus groups, education associations, internal data, Advisory Committees, Community Conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>Publications, websites, education associations, state data, newsletters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>Publications, websites, newspapers, federal and state reports, economic development agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory environment</td>
<td>Accreditation and regulatory bodies, publications, websites, federal/state reports, education associations, conferences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Core Component 5D
The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. **The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.**

An important component in achieving college-wide performance projections is the establishment of a dashboard system at the College, VP, and department levels. Department and CAP team IOSs align with the dashboard IOSs and also include department-specific key measures that collectively support and drive
improvement in the IOSs reflected on those dashboards. The plan development step of the SPS requires resetting of the department IOSs. In addition, as discussed earlier, every department establishes action plans that relate to the CAPs where appropriate. IOSs are identified for the DAPs, which provide an assessment of department progress towards accomplishing their objectives. CAP champions are responsible to aggregate DAP IOSs as they relate to each CAP and to create a CAP dashboard, which is used to demonstrate progress during reviews and in monitoring reports.

2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

As described earlier, review and assessment are the basis for establishing and deploying modified plans during the course of the plan year if and when it becomes necessary to change direction. The Board Monitoring Report (BMR) process provides the opportunity for discussion and mid-course corrections depending on progress and changes in the environment. The BMR ensures that a full-blown review of every CAP is brought before the SLT and the Board for an in-depth discussion of actions taken twice per year. The CAP Champion may bring the CAP team – the faculty and staff members involved in the CAP – to SLT for this discussion. SLT uses this opportunity to ensure that the plans to support the CAP are on track and direct modifications as needed. The BMR is also used for an SLT review of the dashboard and all CAP IOSs. If lagging performance is indicated, the SLT focuses its attention in those areas and directs modified actions as necessary. In addition, information is constantly provided to SLT from other means that may cause a new plan to be established. This information could come from the many established “listening posts” or from various data collection sources. These established processes make it possible for the College to enact changes where needed to ensure long-term success. For example, recent changes to the HLC Criteria for Accreditation have resulted in the need for several policy changes. Many of these have been addressed through alterations in the CAPs.