



## **Suffolk County Community College Self-Study**

**Presented to the  
Middle States Commission on Higher Education**

**February 1, 2018**

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## Glossary of Abbreviations

AA –	Associate of Arts
AAS –	Associate of Applied Science
AS –	Associate of Science
AAC –	Assessment Advisory Council
AACC –	American Advisory Council
AAMC –	Academic Advisory and Mentoring Centers
AES –	Administrative and Educational Support Units
AME –	Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees
AtD –	Achieving the Dream
BOD –	Board of Directors
BOT –	Board of Trustees
BRO –	Budget Review Office
CAAC –	College Association Advisory Committee
CAPIE –	Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Institutional Effectiveness
CASC –	College of Academic Standards Committee
CIP –	Center for Innovative Pedagogy
CGC –	College Governance Council
CLO –	Course-level Student Learning Outcome
COI –	Conflict of Interest
CPT –	College Placement Test
CSJHU –	Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding
DEC –	Distance Education Committee
EOP –	Educational Opportunity Program
ETU –	Educational Technology Units
FA –	Faculty Association of Suffolk County Community College
FERPA –	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
FTE –	Full-Time Equivalent Student Enrollment
FTFT –	First-Time Full-Time Student
GAO –	Guild of Administrative Officers of Suffolk County Community College
IEG –	Institutional Effectiveness Goal
IG –	Institutional Goal
ITS –	Information Technology Services
JPAC –	Joint Planning and Assessment Council
KPI –	Key Performance Indicator
LRC –	Learning Resource Center
MIO –	Measurable Institutional Objective
MSCHE –	Middle States Commission on Higher Education
SED –	New York State Education Department
OIT –	Office of Information Technology
OPIE –	Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

PLO –	Program-level Student Learning Outcome
SAIN –	Student Advisement Information Notice
SED –	State Education Department
SEIS –	Student Engagement through Informed Support
SLO –	Student Learning Outcome
SoL-II –	Stay on Long Island Initiative
SPC –	Strategic Planning Council
SUNY –	State University of New York
VFA –	Voluntary Framework for Accountability
VLC –	Virtual Learning Commons



## Middle States Standard Criteria and Report Section Guide

Standard	Criteria	Section in Report
<b>I</b>	1a	1.1, 1.2
	1b	1.1
	1c	1.1
	1d	1.2, 1.3, 1.4
	1e	1.6
	1f	1.1, 1.5
	1g	1.5
	2	1.2
	3	1.2, 1.4, 1.6
	4	1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6
<b>II</b>	1	2.1, 2.5
	2	2.2, 2.3, 2.4
	3	2.2, 2.4
	4	2.5, 2.6
	5	2.6
	6	2.5, 2.7, 2.9
	7a	2.8
	7b	2.8
	8a	2.7
	8b	2.7
	8c	2.7
	8d	2.7
	8e	2.7
	9	2.9
<b>III</b>	1	3.1, 3.4
	2a	3.5
	b	3.5
	c	3.5
	d	3.5
	e	3.5
	3	3.1
	4	3.3, 3.4
	5a	3.1
	5b	3.1
	5c	N/A
	6	N/A

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Section in Report</b>
<b>III</b>	7	N/A
	8	3.2, 3.3
<b>IV</b>	1	4.1, 4.2
	1a	4.6
	1b	4.3, 4.5
	1c	4.3, 4.4, 4.8
	1d	4.4, 4.7, 4.10
	2	4.2, 4.3
	3	4.12
	4	4.8
	5	N/A
	6	4.11
	<b>V</b>	1
2a		5.2, 5.3
2b		5.2, 5.3
2c		5.2, 5.3, 5.6
3a		5.3
3b		5.3, 5.4
3c		5.4, 5.5
3d		5.6
3e		5.4
3f		5.1
3g		5.7
3h		5.7, 5.8
4		N/A
5		5.7, 5.8
<b>VI</b>	1	6.1, 6.2
	2	6.2
	3	6.2, 6.3
	4	6.4, 6.6, 6.7
	5	6.1
	6	6.4, 6.5
	7	6.3
	8	6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.6, 6.8
	9	6.2

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Section in Report</b>
<b>VII</b>	1	7.1, 7.2, 7.5, 7.6
	2a	7.2
	2b	7.2
	2c	7.1, 7.3, 7.4
	2d	7.2
	2e	7.2
	2f	7.3
	2g	7.7
	2h	7.2
	2i	7.3
	3a	7.3
	3b	7.3
	3c	7.3
	3d	7.4
	4a	7.4
	4b	7.4
	4c	7.4
	4d	7.4
	4e	7.4
	4f	7.7
	5	7.7

## **Executive Summary**

Suffolk County Community College is the largest community college in the State University of New York (SUNY) system, enrolling more than 26,000 students. It offers more than 60 degree and certificate programs in business; communications and the arts; computing; health, community and human services; liberal arts and sciences; and technical, scientific and engineering studies. By May 2015, the College had more than 115,000 graduates. With three campuses, a Culinary Arts and Hospitality Center, and Sayville Downtown Center that houses the School of Nursing, the College provides educational opportunities for Suffolk County residents through an emphasis on a well-rounded, liberal arts education and workforce development programs.

In 2015, the College began a comprehensive self-study led by a Steering Committee appointed by President McKay to lead seven working groups, a writing committee and a logistics committee comprised of over 100 faculty, students, staff and administrators. The President also appointed two co-chairs to lead each standard committee and a Cabinet representative to provide support during the process.

The intended outcomes of the 2017-2018 Self-Study were to

- Demonstrate that the College meets or exceeds expectations of compliance with MSCHE's seven standards for accreditation and requirements of affiliation.
- Evaluate the College's progress in achieving our six Institutional Goals in relation to the overall Strategic Plan.
- Demonstrate our advancement in enhancing and maintaining a culture of ongoing assessment of student achievement and institutional and educational effectiveness, student support programs, and planning and effective resource allocation, and the use of assessments in decision making.

The committees completed the review of their assigned standard with the general charge to develop a report based on their analysis of the Middle States Standard's criteria and to identify linkages to the College's six Institutional Goals (student success, community development/societal improvement, access and affordability, institutional effectiveness, communication and diversity).

The committee co-chairs submitted reports to the Self-Study Steering Committee in the spring of 2017. During the summer of 2017, the writing committee began to craft a report reflective of the Suffolk County Community College story. The draft report was shared with the campus community in fall of 2017 and the feedback and suggestions were incorporated in the final Self Study report.

The findings and recommendations for each of the standards and intended outcomes are discussed below.

### **Standard I: Mission and Goals**

The self-study process has provided an opportunity to review the College's guiding documents, assess how they are serving our community, and demonstrate how they continue to support further institutional growth and enhanced quality. The College community reviewed its Mission and Vision statements in 2011 when undertaking the task of creating a Strategic Plan to span the years 2013-2020.

This latest Self-Study determined the College community's familiarity with the Mission Statement and whether the current statement reflected the purpose of the College at this time in its history. A survey was distributed to internal and external stakeholders and findings revealed that both groups agreed with the Mission Statement. The Self-Study also offered a chance to reflect on the Mission and to gather input for use in the next round of Strategic Planning, which will begin in the 2018-2019 academic year. Additionally, the review found that the College's Institutional Goals continue to focus on student learning and institutional effectiveness, consistent with the College's Mission. Also, the College has developed and implemented policies and procedures to tie all assessment and evaluation, strategic and operational planning, and budget and resource allocation to its Mission and Institutional Goals.

There is no recommendation for this standard.

### **Standard II: Ethics and Integrity**

The College's policies and procedures are the hallmarks of the institution's ethics and integrity and are reflected in the College culture. As shown in its Mission Statement, the College is committed

to “social and ethical” awareness, which extends to engagement with internal and external communities. Consistent with three of the College’s Institutional Goals (Access and Affordability, Communication, and Diversity), the College prides itself on its commitment to ethics and integrity, including academic and intellectual freedom, respect for diversity, fair and impartial practices, honesty, truthfulness, and transparency. The College safeguards ethics and integrity through its regular assessment of policy, procedure, and practice as well as through the appropriate and effective use of College resources, as documented in the Self-Study. The review led to the following recommendations:

Recommendation: The College should review the Academic Integrity Policy, its implementation, and how it is monitored.

Recommendation: The College should create a single comprehensive and accessible statement of rights and responsibilities regarding intellectual property or faculty and students.

### **Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience**

Suffolk County Community College, as an open access institution, designs and delivers coherent academic programs that meet high standards and convey the breadth of human knowledge, while also serving the needs of a student body with diverse academic goals and varying levels of academic preparedness. Consistent with its primary Institutional Goal of fostering “the intellectual, physical, social, and civic development of students,” the College engages in curriculum development through thoughtfully designed, shared governance processes. With highly qualified and motivated faculty, the College makes many degree programs available across the campuses, devises expanded course scheduling to accommodate post-traditional students, and offers numerous courses in an online modality. Additionally, the College has well documented procedures in place for the thoughtful development and improvement of rigorous courses and programs. Through clearly defined procedures for the hiring, tenuring, and promotion of faculty and administrators, the College ensures that the learning opportunities it provides are developed, delivered, and assessed by qualified academic professionals. With the development and assessment of comprehensive

academic services, the College nurtures a student-centered culture that supports access and success in a diverse range of disciplines and programs. The review led to the following two recommendations:

Recommendation: The College should collaborate with governance and the Faculty Association to implement a college-wide course evaluation system which will provide students' feedback regarding their educational experience and to incorporate that feedback into the design and delivery of its courses.

Recommendation: The College should find ways to improve the online student support services to improve the online educational experiences and increase student success rates to approach face to face instruction success rates.

#### **Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience**

During the past several years, the College has placed enhanced emphasis on ensuring that all students are presented with a full student experience while enrolled. This has required many shifts and changes, both to the structure and the types of initiatives that have been developed and implemented within the Division of Student Affairs. The College has provided resources in recognition of changing student demographics to support students in reaching their educational goals. These include the development of an Office of Veterans Affairs, as well as improvement in Mental Health Services and services for Differently Abled Students and English Language Learners. There is also an emphasis on Multicultural Affairs. Over the past several years, the College has worked to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion across the institution by designating an Assistant Director of Campus Activities and Multicultural Affairs for each campus, establishing the Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding, creating a Presidential Multicultural Affairs Committee, and establishing an LGBTQ Task Force. The College's current participation in Achieving the Dream enables it to further review items related to student persistence and completion of the at-risk student population. The review led to the following two recommendations.

Recommendation: The College should continue to refine processes to support student retention and based on our AtD information focus on African American and part-time students.

Recommendation: The College should enhance the onboarding processes to educate students about communication technology while increasingly leveraging technology to communicate with prospective, new and current students.

### **Standard V: Educational Effectiveness**

Suffolk County Community College prepares students for success by ensuring their readiness to transfer into four-year degree programs, enter the workforce, or advance in their current career by providing sound educational experiences. Through the careful construction of degree and certificate programs, each with clearly articulated course and program learning outcomes, students are given the tools they need to achieve their individual goals. Outcomes are regularly assessed at the course, program, and institutional level, allowing for ongoing improvement and assessment of the student experience. Over the past several years, the College has developed a culture of assessment reflected in the implementation of the Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Institutional Effectiveness (CAPIE), which structures systematic and sustainable assessment practices in use at the College, linking assessment activities to the College's Mission and Vision statements. Through annual assessment reporting for SUNY General Education, academic and AES units, and periodic program and unit reviews, there are ongoing efforts to collect data and make improvements to the educational outcomes of students. Professional development activities for faculty and staff regarding assessment continue to grow college-wide. The constituency that would benefit from further professional development is the part-time instructional faculty, so the review led to the following recommendation:

Recommendation: The College should use a web based platform accessible to both full-time and adjunct faculty to share teaching and learning and assessment resources.



## **Standard VI: Planning Resources, and Institutional Improvement**

Suffolk County Community College engages in a comprehensive, integrated planning process that incorporates assessment and evaluation to inform resource allocation and decision-making for institutional effectiveness. The College has assessment practices strengthened by the implementation of the Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Institutional Effectiveness (CAPIE). The budgetary processes of the College have been streamlined, integrated, and linked to the Institutional Goals. Rubrics and forms designed through a collaborative effort have simplified the process and ensured the use of assessment. The Strategic Plan connects the Operating Budget to assessment activities. The Master Plan connects the Capital Program to Institutional Goals. In this way, college-wide assessment informs both budgets. The Strategic Plan, Operational Plan, the CAPIE, and the Master Plan are a result of college-wide collaboration and formal assessment. They demonstrate the College's progress toward its six Institutional Goals. The review of this standard determined that a diverse population from the College community engages in the development, formalization, maintenance, and implementation of these plans.

There is no recommendation for this standard.

## **Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration**

Suffolk County Community College is a large, complex institution that has developed an effective administrative structure, overseen by an active, independent Board of Trustees.

Following the duties articulated in its Bylaws and as required by State law and regulation, the Board of Trustees has oversight of the President as well as policies and procedures, and has the fiduciary responsibility to ensure the College is working to carry out its Mission. Further, the Board of Trustees fulfills the duties articulated in its Bylaws, including evaluation of the President.

The College has an active campus-based Faculty Governance structure whose members interact and collaborate regularly across the campuses, with their counterparts in administration (including the President), and the student body.

The administration is qualified, experienced, engaged, of appropriate size and expertise, and fulfills the needs of the clearly defined organization structure. Further, there is a college-wide system of

assessment of the effectiveness of governance and administrative units that reflects the institution's evolved culture of assessment aimed at continual improvement. However, shared Faculty Governance has not employed a systematic, universal self-assessment system as other units of the College have. The review led to the following recommendation.

**Recommendation:** Faculty Governance should conduct annual, systematic self-assessments, as other units of the College do, and demonstrate a commitment to self-improvement based upon assessment results.

The self-study process engaged the College community in confirming the College's compliance with the seven Middle States Commission on Education standards and requirements of affiliation. The self-study process was also beneficial for the College in evaluating its progress in achieving the six Institutional Goals. The College identified current initiatives such as Achieving the Dream, workforce and STEM-related program development, and expanded services to meet the needs of our student population as contributing to reaching our goals. The results of this review will be used to inform the College's next Strategic Plan in the upcoming year. Further, Suffolk County Community College has focused on creating a culture of sustainable assessment over the past several years. Most importantly, this Self-Study provided an opportunity for the College to reflect on the progress which has been made in this area and identify items for improvement and celebration. The College is proud of its accomplishments in assessment and continues to embrace opportunities to support academic excellence and institutional effectiveness. The College's 2017-2018 Self-Study documents this achievement by the entire College Community and serves as evidence of its accomplishments.

# **Introduction**

## **Institutional Overview**

On December 18, 1959, Suffolk County Community College of the State University of New York was founded under the administration of a nine-member Board of Trustees, five appointed by the then County Board of Supervisors and four by the Governor of the State of New York. On October 3, 1960, the College officially opened, occupying temporary facilities at Sachem Junior-Senior High School in Ronkonkoma, New York, as well as part-time facilities at Riverhead High School in Riverhead. Initial enrollment included 171 full-time students and 335 part-time students.

As the College began to grow, the Board of Supervisors of Suffolk County provided a 130-acre site in Selden for a permanent campus. Six buildings on the site were renovated and converted, equipment necessary for the operation of the College was obtained, and in August 1961 the College occupied what was later to be known as the Ammerman Campus, renamed in honor of the College's founding president, Dr. Albert M. Ammerman. Two other permanent campuses were opened: the Michael J. Grant Campus in Brentwood in 1974 (formerly called the Western Campus) and the Eastern Campus in Riverhead in 1977.

In 2005, in an effort to revitalize traditional downtown areas and provide additional access to educational opportunities for County residents, the College embarked on opening two downtown satellite educational centers. The Sayville downtown center was opened to address nurse education and the allied health professions and, in January 2008, the Culinary Arts and Hospitality Center of the Eastern Campus opened in downtown Riverhead to offer two-year AAS degrees in Culinary Arts, Baking and Pastry Arts, and Hotel and Resort Management, as well as one-year certificates and Continuing Education courses. The facility is also home to the Practical Nursing certificate program.

Suffolk County Community College is the largest community college in the State University of New York (SUNY) system, enrolling more than 26,000 students. It offers over 60 degree and certificate programs in business; communications and the arts; computing; health, community and

human services; liberal arts and sciences; and technical, scientific and engineering studies. By May 2017, the College had more than 134,000 graduates.

**Table A. Top Ten Programs College-Wide by Graduates: 2015-2016**

Degree	Program of Study	Graduates
Associate in Arts	Liberal Arts and Sciences – General Studies	1,737
Associate in Science	Criminal Justice	267
Associate in Applied Science	Nursing-RN-Day	152
Associate in Science	Business Administration	138
Associate in Applied Science	Business Administration	112
Associate in Science	Accounting	110
Associate in Arts	Liberal Arts and Sciences – Social Sciences: Psychology Option	88
Associate in Applied Science	Nursing-RN-Evening	77
Associate in Science	Liberal Arts & Sciences: Biology Option	59
Associate in Applied Science	Veterinary Science Technology	55

As the College completes its 58<sup>th</sup> year, Suffolk’s faculty, staff, and administrators are dedicated to fostering an environment that helps students attain their educational goals, while embracing the philosophy of life-long learning. The College is dedicated to updating curriculum and investing in facilities that offer instructional experiences and equipment that will best serve the needs of its students. The College Mission Statement states Suffolk County Community College promotes intellectual discovery, physical development, social and ethical awareness, and economic opportunities for all through an education that transforms lives, builds communities, and improves society.

With a strong emphasis on the importance of a well-rounded, liberal arts education, the College has increasingly supported faculty training and professional development. Faculty-driven initiatives designed to engage students in the arts and humanities, as well as prepare them for baccalaureate and graduate study, assist the College in fulfilling its Mission. Additionally, during the past decade, the College has increased its emphasis on the Science, Technology, and Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) fields. Today, Suffolk is nationally recognized for its National Science Foundation-sponsored S-STEM program and New York State-sponsored STEM, CSTEP and STEP programs. These programs provide academic support services, advising/tutoring, and real-world experiences for an increasing and diverse population of STEM scholars. In addition, students have

received prestigious and competitive research internships at multiple federal lab facilities located across the country.

The College has also built an extensive track record of successfully training workers for the highly technical demands of Long Island-based industries. The institution is experienced in creating pathways from high school to college to industry, establishing shorter-term certificate programs, and developing training and articulation agreements related to worker and student retention and advancement. At the core of its successful workforce programs are the close linkages formed with business, industry, governmental agencies, and community organizations to enhance learning and employment opportunities for its students, and to ensure the continued vitality of the local economy.

Suffolk awards more than \$650,000 in scholarships annually. One of its major scholarship programs is the Stay on Long Island Initiative (SoLII), launched in 2010. Fifteen institutions of higher education on Long Island have agreed to become partnering institutions in this effort. Through this program, 200 scholars have been awarded over \$5 million in scholarship funds, enabling them to graduate from Suffolk, transfer to a partnering Long Island institution, and stay in the region to complete their education. Today, over 80% of the College's students remain in the area after they graduate.

The College is nearing completion on a new Health and Wellness Facility at the Eastern Campus and recently opened a new Learning Resource Center on the Michael J. Grant Campus in Brentwood. The Michael J. Grant Campus will also be the location for a new Renewable Energy/STEM Center, which will house new academic initiatives being developed in Energy Management, Alternative Energy Technologies, Sustainability Studies, and Cybersecurity.

Each year, the institution builds upon a legacy that responds to the needs of its Suffolk County communities by welcoming people of all backgrounds and abilities; by providing good stewardship of resources; by enhancing academic programs and student services; and by changing lives for the better. Suffolk's students continue to shine and excel, frequently being recognized nationally, regionally, and locally with scholarships and awards for their academic success, as well as their student life and community service contributions.

Suffolk’s graduates have gone on to study at the nation’s most notable institutions, including Columbia, Harvard, Cornell, New York University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and at multiple institutions affiliated with the State University of New York.

### Self-Study Process

The College underwent a comprehensive self-study with committees addressing each of the standards, as well as a writing committee and logistics committee. President McKay appointed Dr. Lauren Tacke-Cushing, College Dean of Instruction, and Associate Professor of English, Daniel Linker, to co-chair the Self-Study Steering Committee. The President also appointed two co-chairs to lead each working committee and a Cabinet representative to provide support during the process. In addition, members of the Board of Trustees were invited to participate on the committees. The alignment of the College’s six Institutional Goals and Middle States standards is presented in Table B.

Table B. Alignment of Institutional Goals and MSCHE Standards	
Institutional Goals	Standards
<b>1. Student Success</b>	I, III, IV, V, VI, VII
<b>2. Community Development/Societal Improvement</b>	I, III, IV, V, VI, VII
<b>3. Access and Affordability</b>	I, II, III, IV, VI
<b>4. Institutional Effectiveness</b>	I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII
<b>5. Communication</b>	I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII
<b>6. Diversity</b>	I, II, III, IV, VI, VII

The intended outcomes of the 2017-2018 Self-Study are

- Demonstrate that the College meets or exceeds expectations of compliance with MSCHE’s seven standards for accreditation and requirements of affiliation.
- Evaluate the College’s progress in achieving its six Institutional Goals in relation to the overall Strategic Plan.

- Demonstrate advancement in enhancing and maintaining a culture of ongoing assessment of student achievement and institutional and educational effectiveness, student support programs, and planning and effective resource allocation, and the use of assessments in decision making.

The conclusion of the report summarizes the progress that has been made toward each of these intended outcomes during the self-study process. The last intended outcome is a direct result of recognition that over the past several years the College has developed a focus on institutional effectiveness and improvement that has led to the development of an emerging culture of assessment. During the self-study design review process it became apparent that reviewing progress and highlighting achievements in institutional and academic assessment should be a focus in our review.

Four key groups led the self-study process, the Self-Study Steering Committee, seven standard committees, a logistics committee, and a writing committee. The Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations document was overseen by Dr. Tacke-Cushing, the Accreditation Liaison Officer, with assistance from the Accreditation Specialist, a position that was created to assist in external accreditations reporting at the College.

**Table C. Self-Study Steering Committee**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Committee</b>
<b>Dr. Christopher Adams</b>	Vice President for Student Affairs	Standard IV
<b>Dana Antonucci-Durgan</b>	Head Librarian, Eastern Campus	Writing
<b>Dr. Katherine Aguirre</b>	Campus Director of Admissions, Ammerman Campus	Logistics
<b>Mary Lou Araneo</b>	Vice President for Institutional Advancement	Writing
<b>Paul Basileo</b>	Coordinator of Instructional Technology/Professor, Ammerman Campus	Standard VII
<b>Dr. Courtney Brewer</b>	Assistant Professor of Psychology, Ammerman Campus	Standard V
<b>Dr. Jennifer Browne</b>	Associate Dean for Curriculum Development	Standard III
<b>Leslie Buck</b>	Professor	Standard VI

<b>Dr. Marc Fellenz</b>	Professor of Philosophy, Michael J. Grant Campus	Standard III
<b>Bernadette Garcia</b>	Professor, Communications/Arts and Languages, Michael J. Grant Campus	Standard I: Mission and Goals
<b>Lisa Hamilton</b>	Director of Campus Activities and Student Leadership Development, Michael J. Grant Campus	Logistics
<b>Dr. Paul Beaudin</b>	Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs	Standard III
<b>Dr. James Keane</b>	Michael J. Grant Campus Executive Dean/Campus CEO	Standard II
<b>Martha Kinney</b>	Associate Professor of History, Michael J. Grant Campus	Standard V
<b>Ted Koukounas</b>	Academic Chair, Professor of Mathematics, Eastern Campus	Standard I
<b>Dr. Dorothy Laffin (retired)</b>	Eastern Campus Executive Dean, Campus CEO	Standard V
<b>Daniel Linker</b>	Associate Professor of English, Ammerman Campus	Steering Committee Co-Chair
<b>P. Wesley Lundburg</b>	Ammerman Campus Executive Dean, Campus CEO	Standard VII
<b>Dr. Edward Martinez</b>	Assistant Dean of Student Services, Director of Counseling, Eastern Campus	Standard IV
<b>Dr. Dante Morelli</b>	Associate Professor of Communications, Ammerman	Standard VII
<b>Dr. Patty Munsch Eilbeck</b>	College Assistant Dean for Student Engagement Assessment	Standard IV
<b>Sandra O'Hara</b>	Assistant to the President	Logistics
<b>Matthew Okerblom</b>	College Assistant Dean for Curriculum Development	Standard VI
<b>Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen</b>	Vice President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness	Standard I, Writing
<b>Louis Petrizzo</b>	College General Counsel	Steering Committee
<b>Dr. Lauren Tacke-Cushing</b>	College Dean of Instruction	Steering Committee Co-Chair
<b>Dr. Troy Tucker</b>	College Assistant Dean, Grants Development	Standard II
<b>Dr. Filiz Turhan</b>	Professor of English, Ammerman Campus	Writing
<b>Christina Vargas</b>	Chief Diversity Officer/Title IX Coordinator	Standard II
<b>Gail Vizzini</b>	Vice President of Business and Financial Affairs	Standard VI
<b>Carol Wickliffe Campbell</b>	Chief of Staff to the President	Logistics



To solicit participation in the Self-Study, President McKay sent a request for nominations of members College-wide, and as a result each committee is balanced with representatives across campuses, disciplines, and positions. There were over 150 participants College-wide, which included staff, faculty, and students.

In order to engage the entire College community in the self-study process, a Suffolk County Community College Self-Study [web page](#) was created and launched in March 2016 with the purpose of sharing important planning documents, a timetable, committee membership, and any updates on the process. The Self-Study Steering Committee co-chairs also provided frequent updates to groups such as the Board of Trustees and Faculty Governance, and during highly attended events such as campus Town Halls, and college-wide Professional Development Days. The full membership of each Standard Committee is available in the Document Repository.

The general charge to each Standard Committee was to develop a report based on the review and analysis of the Middle States Standard's criteria and to identify linkages to the College's six Institutional Goals (student success, community development/societal improvement, access and affordability, institutional effectiveness, communication and diversity). The report was guided by the questions below:

- How does the College meet the criteria of the Standard?
- How does this Standard align with the College's Institutional Goals?

The committees used the Documentation Roadmap 2017 (Appendix A) to inventory all documents provided as evidence of having met the Standard's criteria. Each committee identified any perceived gaps in the inventory and sought additional documentation to complete the Roadmap. In addition, the co-chairs of each committee were tasked with establishing the intended outcomes for each Standard's criteria by showing a link to the Institutional Goals. The Self-Study timeline and related committee charges are located in the Self-Study Design (DR).

The College's evidence of compliance with the Requirements of Affiliation (ROA) 1, 2, 4-6 and 14 is documented in the Verification of Compliance report. The remaining Requirements are addressed in the following Standards and are referenced in bold within the report:

**Table D. Requirements of Affiliation aligned to the Middle States Standards**

<b>Requirements of Affiliation</b>	<b>Standard</b>
<b>ROA 7</b>	Standard I
<b>ROA 8</b>	Standard V and VI
<b>ROA 9</b>	Standard III, V
<b>ROA 10</b>	Standards I, III, IV, V, VI
<b>ROA 11</b>	Standard VI
<b>ROA 12</b>	Standard VII
<b>ROA 13</b>	Standard II, VII
<b>ROA 15</b>	Standard III

The Self-Study Report is organized into four main sections: Executive Summary, Introduction, Analysis and Recommendations for the seven standards, and a Conclusion. Supporting evidence and materials are either linked directly within the text or are provided in the Document Roadmap (Appendix A) and Document Repository.

## **STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS**

*The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it services, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.*

### **Overview**

The Self-Study process provided an opportunity to review the College's guiding documents, assess how they are serving the community, and determine whether they continue to support further institutional growth and enhanced quality. This review included determining the familiarity and concurrence of the Mission by the College community, and examining the process that links College decision-making to its mission and goals. The Self-Study also offered an opportunity to reflect on the Mission and to gather input for use in the next round of Strategic Planning, which will begin in the 2018-2019 academic year. The College's current Strategic Plan, "A Vision of Excellence for Today and Tomorrow 2013-2020," contains Institutional Goals that helped set the parameters and direction of the Self-Study. As the Strategic Plan informed the Self-Study, the results of the Self-Study will inform the next Strategic Plan. This ongoing process creates a continuous system of assessment, implementation, and progress in support of students and ultimately, the College's Mission.

### **Findings and Discussion**

#### **1.1 Mission and Vision**

Suffolk County Community College's current Mission and Vision Statements were developed between February and October of 2005 when the College's then President, Dr. Shirley Pippins, invited the College community to participate in the drafting of new Mission and Vision statements (DR I Dr. Pippins' Memorandum "College Mission and Vision Statements"). After opportunity for widespread input from both internal and external stakeholders, the drafts were finalized, submitted to, and approved by the College Board of Trustees in October of 2005.

The College Mission Statement is *Suffolk County Community College promotes intellectual discovery, physical development, social and ethical awareness, and economic opportunities for all through an education that transforms lives, builds communities, and improves society.*

The College Vision Statement is *Suffolk County Community College commits to maintaining high educational standards, to fostering and inspiring student success, and to creating diverse opportunities for lifelong learning. By attracting strong leadership and distinguished faculty to a college of excellence, we create an enriched learning environment that empowers students to transform their lives.*

Both the Mission and Vision statements are widely distributed and appear in the College Catalog, on the homepage of the College Website, and in many College publications, including the Annual Review of Accomplishments, the College Fact Book, and the Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Institutional Effectiveness (CAPIE), among others.

The College community reviewed its Mission and Vision statements in 2011, when undertaking the task of creating a Strategic Plan to span the years 2013-2020. On May 6, 2011, President Shaun L. McKay requested that the members of the Strategic Planning Council (SPC, further detailed below) review the Mission and Vision statements of the institution. College Brief #07, dated September 23, 2011, (DR I College Brief #07-2011 Strategic Planning Process) was issued by the President to ask all members of the College community to provide input regarding potential changes to both the Mission and Vision statements. After review by both external and internal stakeholders, the College community reaffirmed the existing statements, and they remained unchanged. **(ROA 7)**.

## **1.2 Institutional Goals**

The Strategic Planning Council (SPC) began the process of developing a Strategic Plan (Appendix D: Strategic Plan 2013-2020), based on the reaffirmed College Mission statement. The first task was a review of the College's five Institutional Goals. Task groups were established to examine and suggest revisions to the College's Institutional Goals. Each group, inclusive of faculty, staff, students, and administrators, provided a thorough review of every goal. The College engaged the services of a nationally renowned consultant to assist with brainstorming about the College's greater purposes, strengths and weaknesses, and strategic potential (DR I SWOT Document). Participants concluded that the existing Institutional Goals were aligned with the College's mission and that they are achievable. These Institutional Goals were then reviewed by the entire College community. After overwhelming support from the community as a whole, the Goals were presented

to the Board of Trustees. On March 15, 2012, the Board approved the five goals and added a sixth goal: Diversity (DR I BOT minutes). While diversity is mentioned in the College’s Vision Statement, it is not yet specifically included in its Mission.

**Table 1.1. Institutional Goals**

Institutional Goals
1 – Student Success: To foster the intellectual, physical, social, and civic development of students through excellent and rigorous academic programs and comprehensive student support services.
2 – Community Development/Societal Improvement: To promote the social and economic development of the community we serve.
3 – Access and Affordability: To provide access to higher education by reducing economic, social, geographic and time barriers.
4 – Institutional Effectiveness: To monitor and assess the performance of the institution to ensure continuous improvement in achieving the mission, vision and goals of the college.
5 – Communication: To promote transparent and effective communication within the college community and between the College community and external constituencies.
6 – Diversity: To reflect the ethnic, demographic, and economic composition of Suffolk County.

Using these Institutional Goals as a foundation, the SPC developed sixteen Measureable Institutional Objectives and 75 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be used in guiding Strategic Planning and assessment of institutional effectiveness in achieving the Goals. (Appendix D: Strategic Plan 2013-2020).

**1.3 Mission-Centered Integrated Strategic and Operational Planning**

Under the leadership of Dr. McKay, the College created an integrated planning model that ties all efforts back to the College’s Mission through its Institutional Goals.

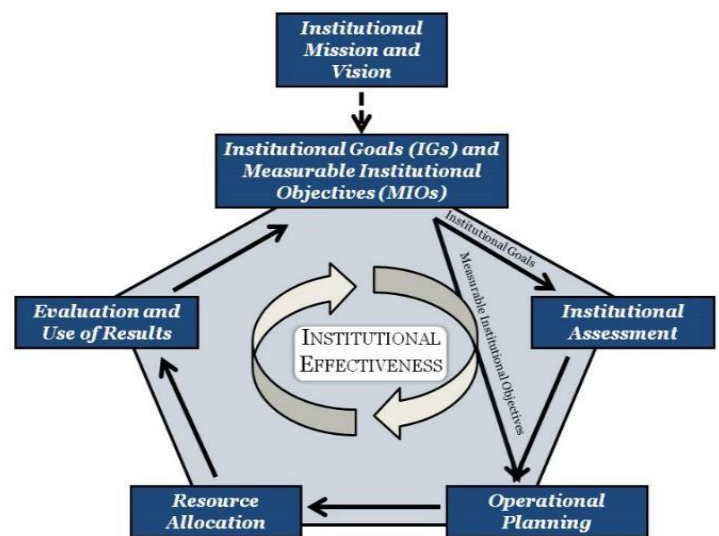
As part of annual operational planning, every division and campus at the College must submit actions or initiatives designed specifically to target elements of the College’s Strategic Plan. Divisions and campuses are expected to provide targeted success metrics for each action or initiative. Once the Annual Operational Plans are approved, they are published on the College website.

In 2011, President McKay established the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE) in order to coordinate planning, assessment, and evaluation efforts at the College and to ensure that all planning and decision-making would be aligned to the College’s Mission and Strategic Plan (DR I College Brief #07-2011 Strategic Planning Process). That office is charged with providing data necessary for effective decision-making, analysis of assessments and evaluations, and working collaboratively to integrate planning and assessment with budget and resource allocation. It works with all departments and units at the College in development of their planning, including development of department missions, objectives, and outcomes.

### 1.4 Integration of Assessment and Evaluation in Planning and Budgeting

The Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Institutional Effectiveness (CAPIE) was implemented in 2012 (Appendix E: Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Institutional Effectiveness). The CAPIE was designed to link assessment, evaluation, planning, and budget/resource allocation, as well as to align to the College’s Mission and each Institutional Goal. This document details how the College integrates all the functions vital to strategic and operational planning, and how progress and effectiveness will be evaluated. The Assessment Advisory Council (AAC) and Strategic Planning Council (SPC), together known as the Joint Planning and Assessment Council (JPAC), were charged with monitoring these processes (ROA 10).

Figure 1. Strategic Planning Process



#### *The Assessment Advisory Council Charge*

- Evaluates the CAPIE to ensure that the processes and activities within the document align with Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) standards, SUNY requirements, and best practices in higher education and to provide recommendations for change where appropriate.

- Systematically reviews assessment plans and final reports (outcomes assessment) from academic programs and administrative and educational support (AES) units.
- Provides end-of-year reviews, with recommendations, of assessment plans/reports and academic/AES program/unit reviews.
- Assists in facilitating communication of the importance of assessment to the broader college community as well as the reporting of results to appropriate stakeholders.

*Strategic Planning Council Charge*

- Reviews plans and the progress made.
- Communicates the status of strategic and operational planning to the College community.
- Provides input at various points of the planning process.
- Proposes any changes to the process of planning (including its relationship to budgeting and resource allocation).
- Recommends revisions to the Strategic Plan.
- Provides counsel to the President as requested.

Table 1.2 provides examples of strategic initiatives related to the Institutional Goals in the 2015-2016 academic year.

**Table 1.2. Examples of 2015-2016 Strategic Actions**

Goals	Division	Action	Progress
1, 2, 6	Academic Affairs	Develop career pathways/credit bearing curriculum between workforce development and appropriate academic departments.	A five-year US Department of Labor Tech Hire grant was awarded to the College in 2016. This \$2.9 million grant will support our ability to provide both credit and non-credit pathways to workforce development/employment in advanced manufacturing, health information technology, and cybersecurity.
1, 3, 5, 6	Student Affairs	As an opportunity to enhance student and faculty discourse develop a Presidential Lecture Series.	The College held its first Presidential Lecture Series on April 4, 2016 and has continued to do so annually.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Legal Affairs	Ensure compliance with Title IX through training and the development, dissemination, and communication of procedures, policies, and expectations.	Updated the policy and procedure for preventing sexual violence and sexual harassment.
1,2,3,6	Institutional Advancement	Pursue additional National Science Foundation Resource Development.	The College was awarded a five-year grant of \$997,656 from the National Science Foundation (NSF) entitled Support for Undergraduates at the Community College Engaged in STEM Studies (SUCCESS).
1, 2, 3, 5	SCC Foundation	Increase alumni engagement in support of the College's Mission.	Alumni Relations hosted and promoted 8 mission-related programs in collaboration with volunteer Alumni Affinity Groups, Enrollment Management, Academic Departments, the Career Centers, and Student Activities.
4	Budget and Finance	Fully implement the Shark art e-procurement system to ensure compliance with New York State Municipal Law and the College's procurement policy.	Shark Mart Phase 1 and Phase II are completed. Phase III is under consideration.

Additional planning processes include

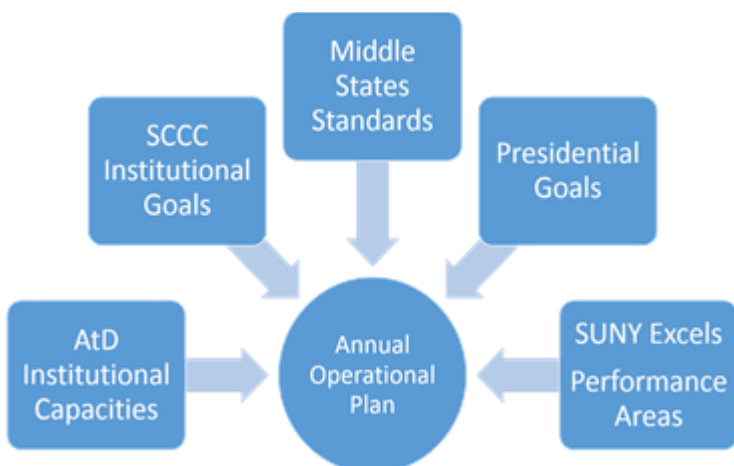
- Strategic Enrollment Management Plan 2015 - 2020 (Appendix F: Strategic Enrollment Management Plan 2015-2010).
- Student Engagement (Retention) Plan 2015 - 2019 (Appendix G: Student Engagement Plan 2015 - 2019).
- Development of a SUNY mandated Strategic Diversity Plan.

The College also received a mandate to take part in the SUNY Performance Management System, SUNY Excels. It is comprised of benchmark metrics and action plans to enhance five areas: Success, Completion, Access, Inquiry, and Engagement. These areas have been integrated into the operational planning process.

In 2017, with the implementation of numerous broad-based initiatives underway, the College's Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE) demonstrated linkages with College Institutional Goals, Presidential Goals, Middle States Standards, Achieving the Dream (AtD) Institutional Capacities, and SUNY Excels Performance Areas.



**Figure 2 Initiatives Linked to Annual Operational Plan**



The SPC and JPAC reviewed the MIOs and KPIs in the context of a routine review of multiple metrics used to measure progress, including data gathered via College participation in the Integrated Post-secondary Educational Data System (IPEDS), Achieving the Dream (AtD), the Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA), Student Achievement Measures, the SUNY Student Opinion Survey (SUNY SOS), SUNY Excels performance management system, and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), among others. As a result, the Council recommended changes to these Objectives and Indicators in the 2016-2017 academic year, which included the use of longitudinal data, more data on part-time students, and clarifications of indicator relationship to objectives. These changes were implemented beginning in the spring of 2017 and will appear in the next report on Institutional Effectiveness (January 2018).

The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness also publishes an Annual Report of Institutional Effectiveness, using the Strategic Plan’s Measureable Institutional Objectives and Key Performance Indicators to gauge progress in achieving Institutional Goals tied to the Mission. In response to a Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) recommendation (DR I Monitoring Visit Team Report), the CAPIE was updated to streamline the document, making it more user-friendly. The CAPIE is reviewed annually by the Strategic Planning Council (DR I SPC Minutes).

Additional information about the integration of assessment/evaluation, planning, and budget and resource allocation appears in Standard VI.

### 1.5 Mission Concurrence and Prominence

In addition to the review of 2011, the current Self-Study has provided a fresh opportunity to determine the College community’s familiarity and satisfaction with the Mission Statement and see whether the current statement reflects the purpose of the College at this time in its history. To help make that determination, survey instruments were developed for three constituencies: faculty and staff, students, and external stakeholders (DR I Mission Concurrence Survey Instruments). The first survey was distributed to faculty and staff in September of 2016. Stakeholders were asked if they thought there was anything missing from the current statement that would be helpful in beginning discussions leading into the next Strategic Planning cycle. Over a period of two weeks, 423 members of the College’s faculty and staff responded to the survey. Results are presented in Table 1.3 below.

**Table 1.3. Mission Concurrence Survey Results-Faculty and Staff**

How conversant are you with SCCC’s Mission Statement?	88% responded “very or somewhat conversant”
To what extent does this Mission Statement convey the primary purpose of the College (its “reason for being”)?	96% responded “very or reasonably well”
How conversant are you with SCCC’s Goals?	88% responded “very or somewhat conversant”
To what extent do the Institutional Goal statements describe what Suffolk strives to be and how we would like the College to be?	89% responded “very or reasonably well”

Furthermore, an analysis of the 266 respondents’ comments to the open-ended questions 3, 5, and 6 confirmed the high rates of concurrence and agreement with the College’s Mission and Goals. The survey garnered several suggestions for consideration when the Mission, Vision, and Institutional Goals are next reviewed (2018-2019). (DI Mission Concurrence Surveys)

To solicit student feedback, OPIE sent a Mission concurrence survey to a stratified random sample of students in October 2016, resulting in 51 student respondents (see Table 1.4). Students were encouraged to include free-response comments, and of the few free-responses submitted, fee

“affordability” was noted as a concern.

Further, OPIE sent a mission concurrence survey to external stakeholders, including members of the County Legislature, local workforce leaders, and K-12 educational leaders, resulting in a small response (14), which also confirmed concurrence.

**Table 1.4. Mission Concurrence Survey Results-Students and External Stakeholders**

	Student Responses	External Stakeholders*
	Very Well or Reasonably Well	Very Well or Reasonably Well
To what extent does the Mission Statement convey the primary purpose of the College (our “reason for being”)?	96%	86%
To what extent do the Institutional Goal statements describe what SCCC strives to be and how we would like the College to be?	92%	100%

\*County Legislature, Workforce Leaders, K-12 Educational Leaders

### 1.6 Mission-Centered Decision-Making

A review of all academic program and Administrative and Education Support (AES) Unit missions, goals, and outcomes was completed after the implementation of the CAPIE to ensure alignment with the College Mission and to strengthen College-wide annual assessment processes. As a result, the institution implemented a periodic AES Unit Review process. The Academic Program Review process was also reviewed and revised.

Planning and accreditation processes have provided the College with numerous opportunities to improve the institution. For example, among the recommendations made by the MSCHE reviewers following the College’s 2012 Periodic Review Report, was the development of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO). In response, with broad, robust participation through the shared governance process, the College community worked on the creation of ILOs. The College’s Mission was a central point of discussion during this process, which eventually led to recommended Institutional Educational Goals (IEG) (DR I College Brief #120-2016 IEGs) that the administration approved in fall 2016. A more detailed explanation of this process is included in Standard III.

In order to help students graduating from community colleges move on to four-year schools as true juniors, in 2012, the State University of New York mandated that associate degree programs offered at SUNY community colleges adhere to transfer paths, providing a “seamless” transfer (DR I College Brief #09-2016 Seamless Transfer). This included a limit of 64 credits in most academic programs, requiring a full and comprehensive College-wide review of all program requirements. This was an opportunity for a major review of curriculum and course offerings that allowed the College to assess its own local graduation requirements. As different educators, departments, and areas each presented pedagogical views and responses to this opportunity, again the Mission and Goals were used to help inform these decisions and allow the necessary changes while retaining the College’s unique identity.

### 1.7 Mission and Vision-Centered Initiatives

The institution’s Mission, Vision, and Goals have also helped lead toward new initiatives that improve the College, enhance its stature, and demonstrate the continued relevance of its Mission, many of which are described throughout the Self-Study report. Some examples of specific initiatives tied directly to the Mission are presented in Table 1.5.

**Table 1.5. Mission and Vision Centered Initiatives**

Mission Themes	Initiatives
<i>Intellectual Discovery</i>	<p>In spring 2017, the College hosted the SUNY Undergraduate Research Conference (Eastern SURC) (DR I College Brief #07-2016 SURC), the first time a community college had ever hosted the event.</p> <p>A vibrant fine arts program, including theatrical productions and regular showings at our art galleries, as well as many other opportunities for student and faculty creative expression, such as our annual philosophy conference and the annual Creative Writing Festival. Other programs, such as <u>Professors on Wheels</u>, demonstrate the College’s commitment to the academic profession as well as the community.</p>

<p><b><i>Physical Development</i></b></p>	<p>In fall 2017, the College began offering a Physical Education Studies AS degree for students interested in teaching physical education in a K-12 setting.</p> <p>In 2015, the College broke ground on a Health and Wellness Center on the Eastern Campus that will provide space for physical education classes as well as provide access to fitness options for East End residents.</p>
<p><b><i>Social and Ethical Awareness</i></b></p>	<p>The <u>Center for Social Justice &amp; Human Understanding</u> (CSJHU) is sponsored by the College’s Board of Trustees to encourage human rights awareness and foster the values of respect and diversity. In collaboration with the College-wide Office of Multicultural Affairs and Campus Activities offices, the Center held forums in spring 2017 at each campus to provide a safe environment for students to discuss the gang-related incidents that have occurred in close proximity to the College’s Michael J. Grant Campus and to provide organized training to develop productive ways to respond through community advocacy and engagement (College Brief #89-2017 Center for Social Justice &amp; Human Understanding Introduces “In our backyard” series).</p>
<p><b><i>Economic Opportunities</i></b></p>	<p>In 2008, the Suffolk Community College Foundation received the largest gift in its history--\$5 million from an anonymous donor. Through this gift, the <u>“Get There From Here”</u> scholarship was established to support members of Suffolk County’s diverse populations in order to help them achieve their academic, personal and professional potential. Since that time, there have been, on average, 30-50 <i>Get There From Here</i> scholars enrolled annually across the College.</p>

	A \$2.9 million U.S Department of Labor job training grant was awarded to the College in 2016. The Resources and Education that Support Training Opportunities within the Regional Economy (RESTORE) grant is being used to train individuals and provide them with the skills and credentials required to meet the growth in the areas of cybersecurity, manufacturing and health information technologies. The College's new Cybersecurity and Information Assurance AAS degree became available in the fall 2017 semester.
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## **Recommendation**

There is no recommendation for this standard.

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the criteria specified in Middle States Accreditation Standard I. The College's mission enjoys widespread endorsement among its stakeholders. The Mission and Goals were reaffirmed in 2011 and form the basis of the College's current Strategic Plan (2013-2020). They will be evaluated again during the next Strategic Planning period, beginning in the 2018-2019 academic year. The College's Institutional Goals continue to focus on student learning and institutional effectiveness, consistent with the College's Mission. In addition, the College has developed and implemented policies and procedures to tie all assessment and evaluation, strategic and operational planning, and budget and resource allocation to its Mission and Institutional Goals.

## **STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY**

*Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its Mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.*

### **Overview**

Suffolk County Community College has been intentional in designing and monitoring College policies and procedures to ensure that they are consistently applied and transparent to the college community. As shown in its Mission Statement, the College is committed to “social and ethical” awareness and this commitment extends to engagement with internal and external communities. Consistent with three of the College’s Institutional Goals (Access and Affordability, Communication, and Diversity), the College’s policies and procedures are the hallmarks of the institution’s ethics and integrity and are reflected in the College culture.

### **Findings and Discussion**

#### **2.1 Academic and Intellectual Freedom**

The College’s commitment to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and freedom of expression is clearly evidenced by its Mission Statement (DR II, 1, 2016 2018 College Catalog, Page 11 - Mission and Vision Statements), where the term “intellectual discovery” refers broadly to both the academic freedom for faculty and the intellectual freedom that allows students to seek, experience, and express diverse points of view. The Faculty Association of Suffolk County Community College (FA) employment contract also aligns with this term in the Mission statement through the adoption of the AAUP’s *Statement on Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure* (1940) which guarantees academic freedom (Appendix I, 1, Faculty Association Contract Article IV Section K.pdf). This statement reasons that “institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition” (Appendix I, 1, Faculty Association Contract, Appendix B, AAUP Statement on Academic Freedom).

College policies establish some guidelines for the intellectual property (IP) rights of both internally and externally created content. For distance education class content, the FA contract bestows IP

ownership on faculty and establishes a distance education IP committee to make recommendations (Appendix I, 1, Faculty Association Contract-Appendix J-Distance Education Article VI Intellectual Property.pdf). In 1979, the College adopted the SUNY-wide patent policy (DR II, 1, OwnershipofPatents.pdf), giving the College the rights to “all patentable inventions made by faculty members, employees and students and all others utilizing university facilities...” (DR II, 1, SUNY Patent Policy.htm). However, College policy is less clear regarding the ownership of non-patentable IP created outside of the context of distance education, particularly with reference to students.

The Academic Integrity Committee (DR II, 8 c. and 8 d., Home - Academic Integrity Committee - LibGuides at Suffolk County Community .pdf) promotes the understanding and development of academic integrity polices, including the respect for intellectual property at the level of a student learning outcome across the College by sponsoring:

- A series of tutorials on plagiarism (DR II, 1, Academic Integrity and Plagiarism - LibGuides at Suffolk County Community College.pdf).
- Faculty statements concerning academic integrity (with special attention to plagiarism) on course syllabi (DR II, 1, Academic Integrity Guide for Faculty - LibGuides at Suffolk County Community College.pdf; DR II, 1, AI\_Course\_Outline\_Statement\_\_10-02-15; DR II, 1, AIC\_minutes\_02-25-16.pdf).
- Campus-wide “Academic Integrity Bowl” competitions (DR II, 1, AIC\_Minutes\_03-1915.pdf).
- College membership with the national Center for Academic Integrity (DR II, 1, 09-1208\_aic\_cai\_certificate\_0002.jpeg).

## **2.2 Ensuring Student Understanding of Ethics and Integrity**

The College, in support of its Mission to promote “social and ethical awareness,” provides students with guidelines and policies, referenced below, to advance ethics and integrity in student conduct.

- The *Student Code of Conduct* (DR II, 2, Student Code of Conduct.pdf) rests on five core values: integrity, community, social justice, respect, and responsibility and includes



- A guiding philosophy that promotes “a campus environment that is conducive to academic inquiry, a productive campus life and thoughtful study and discourse” (DR II, 2, Pages 1-2 from SCCC Student Code of Conduct.pdf);
  - And
  - An explanation of the social and ethical standards required of students as part of the institution. An explanation of the philosophy, definitions, jurisdiction, College regulations, student conduct authority, formal conduct procedures, violations of the law, and additional procedures for allegations and violations of Title IX, culminating with a students’ Bill of Rights.
- The *Student Conduct Procedures at Suffolk County Community College; A Student’s Guide to our Educational Process which Incorporates Ethics, Values and Social Responsibility* (DR II, 3, Student Conduct Procedures.pdf), explains the process from the allegation letter to the hearing and appeals and lists the student’s rights.
  - The Anti-Bullying Policy protects freedom of expression by establishing an ethical proscription against bullying (DR II, 3, Anti-Bullying Policy.pdf).
  - College Seminar (COL 101) includes a learning objective requiring students to “[d]emonstrate an awareness of relevant academic policies, processes, and procedures ...” (DR II, 3, COL101\_Syl).

Since its formation in 2005, the Academic Integrity Committee has worked to integrate academic integrity into policies and procedures, faculty development, and student education programs. Results from a 2011 Academic Integrity Survey emphasized the need to effectively promote Academic Integrity. The Student Code of Conduct was revised in 2014, and as part of the revision, integrity is now identified a core value of student conduct (Student Code of Conduct). However, academic integrity issues continue to be a concern. Reassessment of academic integrity at the College has not been systematically or consistently employed, and the procedure through which the number of academic integrity cases is processed, monitored, and recorded is inconsistent, as are educational opportunities for cases of academic misconduct.

### 2.3 Diversity

Students, faculty, administration, and staff celebrate diversity and foster respect for differences through programs offered by the Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs, the Office of Faculty and Professional Advancement, the Office of Campus Activities and Student Leadership Development, the Student Veterans Association, and the Center for Social Justice & Human Understanding (CSJHU) (formerly the Suffolk Center on the Holocaust, Diversity, and Human Understanding). Some programs and initiatives implemented across the College to create and maintain a climate of respect are:

- Women in Leadership Development (WILD) (DR II, 2, WILD 20170301);
- *Latino Americans: 500 Years of History* event series (DRA II, 2, 500 YEARS OF LATINO AMERICANS MASTER PROGRAMS; DR II, 2, 500 YEARS OF LATINO AMERICANS TURNER; DR II, 2, 500 YEARS OF LATINO AMERICANS JANIS PROGRAM);
- The College statement to actively defend the rights of all students, regardless of immigration status (DR II, 2, College Brief #63-2017 Support for Undocumented Student Community);
- The CSJHU Museum's *Embracing Our Differences* exhibit (DR II, 2, Embracing our Differences-Long Island 2016.pdf);
- Fall 2016 Professional Development Day presentations on diversity and inclusion:
- *Beyond LGBTQ: Supporting the Spectrum of Sexual & Gender Identities of Your Students* (DR II, 2, BEYOND LGBTQ INVITEFINAL.pdf);
- *A Day of Reflection* (DR II, 2, College Brief #131-2016 Day of Reflection; DR II, 2, College Brief #128-2016 Orlando); and
- The designation of 14 "All-Gender" restrooms across the three campuses (DR II, 2, LGBTQ\_Info\_Card\_FinalBATHROOMS.pdf; DR II, 2, LGBTQ\_InfoCard\_2p.pdf).

In a 2016 SUNY Student Opinion Survey (Appendix K: Summary Report of Spring 2016 SUNY Student Opinion Survey Comparative Analysis.pdf; DR II, 2, SUNY B 2016 Summary Report - 2965 Suffolk CC.pdf), Suffolk students indicated they were most satisfied with the 1) diversity of student body, 2) campus acceptance of individual differences, and 3) racial harmony on Suffolk's campuses as the top three categories from thirteen options listed to describe campus culture and environment (DR II, 2, SUNY B 2016 Summary Report - 2965 Suffolk CC.pdf, p. 6). Suffolk

students ranked these items higher than any of the six comparable community colleges in the survey and fourth in comparison with all 24 community colleges sampled.

#### **2.4 Grievance Processes and Anti-Discrimination**

The College maintains an active equal opportunity affirmative action policy (DR II, 2, Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy.pdf) as well as both anti-discrimination and sexual harassment policies for employees, students, visitors, and vendors. The Anti-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedure (DR II, 2, F16 Student Discrimination Policy) explains to faculty, administrators, employees, and students how to file a complaint for actions that violate College policy, the steps to prepare a written complaint, and a timeline for the investigation (DR II, 2, F16StudentDiscriminationPolicy, pages 5-7).

The following resources are available for employees, visitors, vendors, administrators, and faculty:

- *Title IX Know Your Rights* defines grievances (DRII, 3, Title IX Brochure 2016 Final Version 722516B);
- *Anti-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures for Students Claims of Discrimination by a faculty member, administrator, employee, guest or contractor* (DR II, 3, Anti-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedure for Student.pdf);
- *Anti-Discrimination Policy and grievance procedure for employee by another employee, claims of discrimination of a guest or contractor* (DR II, 3, E19 Employee Anti-Discrimination Policy.pdf);
- The Collective Bargaining Agreement (PD, Faculty Association Contract.pdf) of the Faculty Association of Suffolk County Community College (2005) documents the grievance process in Article VI (DR II, 3, Faculty Association Contract-Article VI Grievance Procedure.pdf). A parallel procedure exists for employees covered by the Guild of Administrative Officers contract (Appendix J, DRII, Guild Contract-Article XIII Grievance Procedure.pdf). The Agreement between the County of Suffolk and Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees, Inc. (AME) similarly describes the grievance and arbitration procedure to ensure prompt and appropriate resolution (DR Agreement County of Suffolk and AME, Article 13 A);

- Online training courses from Workplace Answers on topics including *EEO and Discrimination Prevention* and *Unlawful Harassment Prevention*, which employees are required to complete; and
- Three governance committees address student, faculty, and staff complaints:
  - Ammerman Senate Quality of Life Committee;
  - Grant Assembly Campus Life Committee; and
  - Eastern Congress Quality of Life Committee (**DR II, I**).

Recently, the Board of Trustees adopted an updated Student Complaint Resolution Policy (DRA II, 3, Student Complaint Resolution Policy Approved\_BOT\_Reso\_2017\_05.pdf), revising the prior procedure (adopted in 2002) and augmenting it with an online complaint box in the MySCCC student portal called, “Having Trouble?” (DR II, 3, comments\_luminis.pdf). Complaints filed online or in person are sent directly to a dean for review. The updated process shortens the time between initial complaint and resolution and allows the College to keep more accessible records. (Table 2.1 represents the top 5 student complaint areas).

**Table 2.1 Top 5 Student Complaint Areas 2014-2017**

Complaint Area	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Student Portal	49%	51%	59%
Advisement	29%	28%	19%
Enrollment and registration	13%	13%	15%
Tuition and Payments	5%	4%	4%
Financial aid	4%	3%	4%

While the number of complaints registered via the student portal increased, from 146 in 2014-15 to 197 in 2016-17, most complaints are still handled by department chairs and campus deans and are not tracked in a centralized manner.

## 2.5 Conflict of Interest

The College avoids both conflict of interest (COI) and the appearance of COI through institutional policies and local and state laws and regulations that guide students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees to avoid a COI, as well as the obligations to disclose suspected incidences.

The following are College COI related policies:

- *The College's Code of Professional Ethics (COPE)* contains the general COI policy for all College employees (DRA II, 4, Code of Professional Ethics.pdf);
- *The College Board of Trustees (BOT) Code of Professional Ethics (COPE)* includes the conflict of interest policy for BOT members. The BOT COPE contains a clear definition of COI and identifies potential COI situations, prohibited activities and disclosure responsibilities (DRA II, 9, A10 BOT Code of Ethics FINAL 03102016) (**ROA 13**). A Board of Ethics (BOE) committee was recently created to oversee and advise the BOT. (DR II, 9, A10 BOT Code of Ethics FINAL 03102016). College BOT members are provided information and training at the annual trustee retreat and new BOT members receive instruction from the College's Office of Legal Affairs on handling COIs. The Student trustee is governed by both the BOT COPE and the Student Code of Conduct (DR II, 9, 7 Student Code of Conduct FINAL 080716.pdf). The Board of Trustees provides a central mechanism through which the College periodically reviews and revises policy and procedures related to ethics and integrity;
- The College Academic Standards Committee (CASC) has proposed a policy (*Faculty Developed Course Materials Policy*) that requires a review of faculty-developed course materials and texts submitted by an independent or departmental committee, which is currently under consideration (DR II, 1, E3 Faculty Publications.pdf; DR II, 9, CASC minutes 050516.doc);
- *BOT Policy on Textbook Access and Affordability* was enacted in response to new SUNY policies. The BOT policy on textbook access and affordability regulates when faculty members may adopt specific required course materials in which they have a vested financial interest (DR II, 6, BOT Policy on Textbook Access and Affordability.pdf);
- *Financial Conflict of Interest Policy*, approved by The President's Cabinet, governs faculty research (DR II, 4, Research conflict of interest);
- *Responsible Conduct of Research Policy* addresses COI issues related to research conducted by students and faculty (DR II, 4, RCR plan 20161024b); and
- *College's Procurement Policy* ensures that the College avoids COI in its purchasing and procurement activities by adhering to General Municipal Law (DR II, 4, Procurement Policy.pdf).

## **2.6 Fair and Impartial Human Resource Practices**

To ensure fair and impartial practices when hiring new employees, each job search committee member receives the COI policy and the College nepotism policy (DR II, 4, Nepotism Policy.pdf). All new employees sign a nepotism form that declares relationships to current employees or members of the BOT. The institution's nepotism policy, enforced through the Office of Employee Resources, helps Suffolk avoid conflicts and any appearance of favoritism. The BOT's Code of Professional Ethics Nepotism Provision reiterates that BOT members may not participate in any personnel-related decisions pertaining to a relative. This aligns with Board policy that empowers the College President with the authority to render all the decisions related to personnel, including hiring, appointment, discipline, and discharge. The BOT nepotism provision ensures that there will be public disclosure of any hiring decision that involves a BOT relative. The FA contract Section J requires fair notice, participation by faculty on search committees, impartiality, and due process (DR II, 5, Faculty Association Contract-Article IV-Section J. Vacancies.pdf). The faculty recruitment procedural guide (DR II, 5, Search Committee Procedures 2013.pdf) makes explicit all procedures related to the composition of search committees and their role, advertising and outreach, and screening and interviewing practices. Every search committee (35 in 2015 and 25 in 2016) begins with an explanation of the importance of diversity, equity, non-discrimination, and inclusion by the AVP for Employee Resources and the Affirmative Action Officer (or Chief Diversity Officer) (DRA II, 5, Page 34 from SCCC 2015 2016 Operational Planning Final Report). The Affirmative Action Officer or Chief Diversity Officer certifies each search committee and applicant pool for diversity.

## **2.7 Communication**

Suffolk County Community College understands the importance of maintaining clear and effective communication with students and external communities regarding its programs of study. The College uses multiple platforms for this purpose. For instance, the College website provides 24/7 information about all majors and programs of study, including program overviews, admission procedures and requirements, credit distribution, and program learning outcomes. A full list of Suffolk's programs can also be found in each issue of the College's magazine, *Career Focus*, which offers in-depth feature stories about selected programs. In addition to being offered as an online magazine, *Career Focus* is directly mailed to approximately 445,000 households in Suffolk County,

is distributed to all high schools, public libraries, and Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) facilities in the region, and is available through campus admissions offices, counseling offices, libraries, cafeterias, and common areas.

Academic communications follow ethical standards established by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. In addition, College recruiting and admissions materials and practices observe mandates by SUNY, the federal government, and the CAS Statement of Shared Ethical Principles, cited in the 2016 Admissions Administrative and Educational Support (AES) Unit Review (DR II, 6, Pages 1-18 from Admissions Unit Review Final 2016, pp. 17-18) (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>) (DR II, 6, Code of Ethics APA) College public relations staff follow the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations code of ethics.

Student consumer information is regularly updated on the College website (DR II, 6, Student Consumer Information) as required by student right-to-know regulations in the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act. Likewise, the College exercises great care in communications regarding class cancellations and other emergencies through the home page of the College website, the main page of the student portal (MYSCCC), participation in *NY-Alert* (DR II, 6, Suffolk County Community College - NY Alert), text messaging, and emailed campus and college briefs.

Internal communications are also expected to follow legal and ethical guidelines, evidenced, for example, in the BOT resolution on Information Technology Policies and Guidelines (DR II, 6, InfoTechPolicyEmployees) and an expanded Employee Email and Cellphone Policy (DR II, 6, EmployeeEmailandCellphonePolicy).

All College publications are “prepared on the basis of the best information available at the time of publication and every effort [is] made to ensure accuracy of content.” (DRA II, 6, Page 6 from Catalog1618) Because the College must reserve the right to change program requirements, students are carefully counseled to double-check with advisers for the most up-to-date academic information. Both the print and electronic version of the catalog provide this guidance and give the direct contact information for the Assistant Dean responsible.

Over the last six years, the College received over 45 awards for its public relations material from NCMPR, SUNY, and a host of other organizations (A, Annual Report of Accomplishments). For the SUNY Student Opinion Survey questions concerning “college catalog,” “communication of college news/information to students,” “accuracy of information on college website,” and “communication of student conduct rules and regulations,” Suffolk ranked first among the six largest SUNY community colleges and in the top third among the 24 schools sampled (DR Reports, Summary Report of Spring 2016 SUNY Student Opinion Survey Comparative Analysis.pdf, p.3).

The College discloses all information regarding assessments, graduation, retention, and certification rates, as well as institutional statistics such as faculty demographics, student demographics, average class size, budget, and expenditures in a “Fact Book” (DR II, 8,; DR II, 8, Appendix C: Factbook January 2017.pdf) accessible on the College’s website. In addition, academic departments with licensure programs include current licensing board pass rates when applicable.

An example of effective communication is the recent introduction of the Cybersecurity AS degree. The College promoted the launch through various channels, such as online ads, print and radio, social media, campus-based digital display screens, posters, flyers, direct student emails, postcard mailings, direct outreach to high schools, faculty outreach, and *Career Focus*. Working in partnership with the Suffolk County Legislature, the College also hosted a Cybersecurity and IT conference in June to increase awareness with regional industry. More than 125 people attended the conference, including cyber professionals from a cross section of industries and leading Long Island companies. In a survey to assess the conference program content, 98% of the audience indicated interest in seeing the College hold another conference next year.

## **2.8 Affordability and Accessibility**

In alignment with Institutional Goal #3, the College promotes affordability and accessibility with more than \$63 million in federal and state financial aid awarded to almost 75% of students annually (DR-IPEDS report, 2015-16). Only about 17% (4,585 in 2014-15) accepted loans and the average amount borrowed was \$3,672 (IPEDS report, 2015-16). Seventy-five percent graduated that year debt-free (IPEDS report, 2015-16). The SUNY Net Price Calculator helps prospective students



understand college costs and the federal, state, and college financial aid programs. (DR II, 7, Suffolk County Community College - Transfer Agreements .pdf).

The College is committed to supporting informed decisions by students in their education choices and financing by disclosing information, as is also required of institutions issuing Title IV funding, about the financial aid application process, eligibility, and awards in the Financial Aid office (DR II, 7, 1718 Steps to Apply for Financial Aid including 2015 DRTEdited), the College Catalog (DR II, 7, Financial Aid SCCC Catalog 2016-2018 pages 42 - 51.pdf; DR II, 7, Scholarships SCCC Catalog 2016 2018 pages 51 - 54.pdf), and the College's website (DR II, 7, Suffolk County Community College - Financial Aid.pdf). The College also includes information about Suffolk on the student consumer information webpage (DR II, 7, Suffolk County Community College - Student Consumer Information.pdf) The student Loan Request Form (DR II, 7, LoanFA.pdf) encourages a careful review of all materials so students understand the consequences of default, annual loan limits, the differences between subsidized and unsubsidized loans, and repayment options.

Students who complete the FAFSA and the Tuition Assistance Program application receive a universal award letter that compares schools and packages by displaying Cost of Attendance, default rate (currently 8.9% for SCCC (IPEDS, 2015-16)), the national two-year college average default rate, and graduation rates.

## **2.9 Assessment**

College administrative offices monitor, review, and update ethics policies and practices. Examples include

- The Office of Grants Development recently completed Responsible Conduct of Research Policy (DR II, 4, RCR plan 20161024b) which requires students involved in federally funded research to undergo online training in research ethics that includes assessment of student learning and certificates for satisfactory completion of the modules.
- The New York State Education Department's Office of Postsecondary Access, Support and Success recently completed a review of the College that included an assessment of all buildings, the website and all publications for compliance with civil rights mandates; and the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights reviewed the accessibility of the College's website and online content to individuals with disabilities. As a result of these

reviews, the College has reviewed and enhanced compliance in these areas and continues to do so.

- The College maintains an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure that research projects conform to human subjects protection standards (DR II, 6, BOT Policy on IRB and Human Subjects' Protection.pdf). (DR II, 4, Complete IRB Policies and Procedures Manual, p. 5).

### **Recommendation(s)**

- The College should review the Academic Integrity Policy, its implementation, and how it is monitored.
- The College should create a single comprehensive and accessible statement of rights and responsibilities regarding intellectual property of faculty and students.

### **Conclusion**

The College meets the criteria specified in Middle States Accreditation Standard II and reaffirms its commitment to ethics and integrity, including academic and intellectual freedom, respect for diversity, fair and impartial practices, and honesty, truthfulness, and transparency. The College safeguards ethics and integrity through its regular assessment of policy, procedure, and practice and through the appropriate and effective use of College resources. When shared with the wider College community, these examples of best practices and improvements documented for the Self-Study will encourage progress and provide incentive for both internal and external stakeholders to further the College's Mission to promote "social and ethical awareness."

## **STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

*An institution provides students with learning experiences that is characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.*

### **Overview**

Suffolk County Community College, as an open access institution, designs and delivers coherent academic programs that meet high standards and convey the breadth of human knowledge, while also serving the needs of a student body with diverse academic goals and varying levels of academic preparedness. Consistent with its primary Institutional Goal of fostering “the intellectual, physical, social, and civic development of students” (IG1), the College engages in curriculum development through thoughtfully designed, shared governance processes. (DR III, Governance Website). With highly qualified and motivated faculty, the College makes many degree programs available across the campuses, devises expanded course scheduling to accommodate non-traditional students, and offers many courses in an online modality.

The complexity of the institution, the ever-changing landscape of higher education, and a student population that lives off-campus all merge to create an institutional need for clear communication regarding the design and delivery of the College’s offerings. The College has prioritized this need by establishing an Institutional Goal to promote “transparent and effective communication within the College community and between the College community and external constituencies” (IG5).

### **Findings and Discussion**

#### **3.1 Shared Governance and Coherent Curricular Design**

Suffolk County Community College offers certificates and associate degrees in more than 60 programs; clear program learning outcomes (DR III, 3, Program Learning Outcomes Webpage), a curriculum map, and an assessment plan exist for each program. Curricular requirements, including schedules of completion, are clearly described (DR III, 3, Student Survey) in the College Catalog (DR III, 1, 2016 2018 Catalog pages 89-181.pdf) and website (DR III, 1 Degree Granting Program Listing), and are communicated to matriculated students via their online Student Advisement

Information Notice (SAIN) (DR III, 3, Sample SAIN Report; SAIN Report Tutorial). All curricula, regardless of modality, are developed and revised through a faculty shared governance process that is data-driven, transparent, and designed to ensure compliance with appropriate internal and external requirements. (DR III, 1, College Curriculum Committees Homepage). (DR III, 1, DE Course Development Form) (**ROA 9**).

To develop programs with degree-appropriate objectives and coherent learning experiences to achieve them, the College not only follows its own procedures, but also works with external partners. All of the College's degree programs are registered with the New York State Education Department (SED) and therefore comply with all applicable laws and regulations administered by SED (DR III, 1, SED Laws and Regulations). The College is also part of the State University of New York (SUNY) system (DR III, 1, SUNY SCCC Page); consequently, all College programs comply with applicable requirements approved by the SUNY Board of Trustees. (DR III, 1, SUNY General Education Requirements). The frameworks allow for continuous assessment of the design and delivery of the student learning experience. As discussed under Standard I, several major changes through the shared governance process that are designed to improve this experience have been recently passed:

- Seamless Transfer Requirements (STRs) (DR, III, 1, Seamless Transfer MTP).
  - Modifications to SUNY's General Education Requirements (DR III, 5a, SUNY Gen Ed Page).
  - Establishment of required "transfer path" (DR III, 1, SUNY Transfer Path Page) courses in certain curricula.
  - Cap of 64 credits for associate degree programs.
- Major review and revision of many of the College's associate degree programs per seamless transfer requirements; (DR III, 1, SCCC Programs with Transfer Paths).
- Drafting of Institutional Learning Outcomes (DR III, 5a, Draft ILOs), and eventual approval of Institutional Educational Goals (IEG) (DR III, 5a, College Brief #120-2016 Institutional Educational Goals) (DR III, 5a, MS Goals Resolution).
  - Programs will demonstrate how students meet these educational goals by using data collected during programmatic and SUNY General Education assessments (DR III, 5b, Suffolk County Community College General Education Assessment).

- Program curriculum maps and assessment plans reflect linkage to the College's IEGs.
- Revision and approval of our own Core Education Requirements (CERs).
  - General The review process included an examination of the CERs in the context of the SUNY
  - Education Requirements, MSCHE's essential skills, and the College's Mission; (DR III, 5a, Local Requirements Timeline).
  - Administration approved the revisions to go into effect in the fall of 2017 (DR III, 5,
  - College Brief #49-2017 Core Education Requirements (Local Graduation Requirements).

Collectively, the incorporation of the Core Education Requirements, the SUNY General Education Requirements, and the College's Institutional Educational Goals into the design of the College's curricula represent intentional efforts to provide students with the educational breadth and fundamental skills that are essential to a liberal arts education in a multicultural world, and to promote the synthesis of knowledge across academic fields, while still offering flexibility for appropriate disciplinary content. Each of these curricular elements has undergone substantial review and revision during the past four years. That such significant changes were completed in a timely and collaborative manner demonstrates the value of the shared governance processes that the College uses to develop and revise curricula and the commitment of College faculty and administration to provide students with the strongest learning experience possible.

While all the certificate and degree programs benefit from these processes, some are also informed by additional requirements of external accreditation bodies (Appendix M:, 1, Programs with External Accreditors); career-oriented programs receive the insights of advisory committees composed of appropriate community professionals (DR III, 1, Advisory Committees Homepage). Maintaining communication between College faculty and these external experts allows the College to remain responsive to the changing needs of the labor market.

Examples of recent curriculum innovations demonstrate the College and Faculty dedication to constant improvement of course and program offerings. These include important changes to the Nursing program (from an AAS to AS), Automotive Service Specialist AAS (to broaden the curriculum and enhance employability), and Computer Science (to improve transferability). In

addition, the newly created Cybersecurity & Information Assurance AAS degree shows how the College is innovating as technology and the employment landscape evolves. (DR: Course Proposals).

### **3.2 Assessment**

Just as the College is committed to continual improvement of its courses and programs through regular and transparent academic assessment as addressed in Standard V, the College also has implemented assessment schedules for all Administrative and Educational Support Units (AES) (DR III, 8, AES Units Goals). These include assessments of educational support areas (academic skills centers, EOP, library services, TRIO, Veterans Services and the writing centers), and require obtaining the perspectives of external evaluators and the development of action plans to implement recommendations that result from the assessments (DR III, 8, AES Unit Review).

Since 2007, the College does not systematically solicit student feedback regarding their educational experience. In March of 2007 the VP of Academic and Student Affairs issued a memorandum regarding Student Course Evaluations for adjunct faculty, and shortly thereafter the FA, in conjunction with the same VP, released an Amended and Restated Memorandum of Understanding on Student Opinion Surveys. At that time a program involving paper and pencil surveys for all faculty lasted for several semesters, but the practice has not been continued for many years. Students are surveyed on various components of their college experience (See Standard IV), but not specifically on course evaluations.

Comprehensive academic program reviews are conducted every seven years. Program reviews include the participation of external reviewers, and examine such factors as assessment results, proposed actions, resources, faculty and staff, curriculum, operational outcomes, and an environmental scan. (DR V 2c, Academic Program Review Template). Further information on the assessment of student learning is contained in Standard V (**ROA 10**).

### **3.3. Distance Education**

Distance Education at the College is strongly aligned with both the College's mission statement to provide "intellectual discovery" and Institutional Goal 3 "to reduce barriers by providing access and affordability." SUNY, the College, and the Faculty Association each provide strong

infrastructure, faculty development, and technical and financial support. In fall 2017, the College received approval by MSCHE, SUNY and SED for the addition of a Business Management Certificate online program. This program is the second online program offered by the College with 90% of the coursework available online. Approved in 2007, the first online program was the AAS in Business Administration. The addition of the second online program permits the institution to pursue additional distance education programming to serve the growing needs of the community.

Distance Education is guided by the College Distance Education Committee (DEC), an advisory and recommending body that was created to ensure that the College maintains quality in its online offerings, and the Office of Academic Affairs. New course offerings, regardless of modality, must be developed through the same shared governance process for rigor and appropriateness. Evaluation of the College's Distance Education offerings was carried out in spring 2017 when President McKay convened a Distance Education Assessment committee to identify both the strengths of Distance Education at the College and areas that may need additional support, resources, or attention. The charge to the committee was based on the attributes from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education's Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education and were aligned with the *State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements* (SARA) for the *National Council for State Authorization Agreements* (DR Distance Education Assessment Report, March 31, 2017). Strengths of the College's Distance Education include a wide array of online courses, a high level of instructor student engagement in online courses, and the policy to use the Blackboard Learn learning management system, which ensures reliable student authentication. While the College has many strengths and resources in the area of Distance Education, areas for improvement may include gauging student readiness, developing innovative online programs, and centralizing the administration of Distance Education by establishing an online campus with its own dean (DR Distance Education Report).

In 2015-2016, 12% of all College enrollments were in 122 fully online classes with another 1% in hybrid courses, which represents nearly a 40% growth in the last seven years (DR Distance Education Report). For students learning in online modalities, technical support and appropriate resources are available (DR III, 4, Student Guide to Blackboard). Online resources include the

Virtual Learning Commons (VLC), an institutionalized innovation from the College's Title III Grant Project: Student Engagement through Informed Support (SEIS). The VLC houses a repository of learning objects created by College faculty to support a selection of key "gateway" courses (DR III, 4, VLC Hit Counts). Analysis of student grades has shown that 31 percent of students in online courses received an "A" and 67.5 percent were considered successful with a grade of "C" or higher. Some 75.5 percent of students enrolled in traditional classes were equally successful. The addition of two other variables appears to impede success. For students who are taking one or more developmental courses and also enrolled in a fully online course, success dropped to 56.2 percent in 2015-2016 compared to 68.4 percent for students enrolled in developmental class(es) and the traditional modality. (Distance Education Report).

The College has implemented resources to support faculty improvement in the design and delivery of online courses. All faculty who teach in DE are initially certified through the College-wide Distance Education Committee (DEC), a training for which there is financial support from the College. As of fall 2017, 271 faculty have been certified to teach in the online modality. Furthermore, the eLearning Faculty Fellowship Academy is a training initiative developed by the Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) with support from the DEC. Its purpose is to equip faculty who are new to eLearning with the tools to develop courses and effectively use their teaching talents in an online format and to introduce new innovations, concepts, and best practices to "veteran" eLearning faculty who are dedicated to significantly revising their courses. As of spring 2017, 34 faculty have been certified graduates of the academy. In addition, the College offers "Quality Matters" certification workshops to help design online course material to increase student retention along with student and faculty satisfaction towards eLearning. In further support of online learning, the College created the Center for Innovative Pedagogy (CIP) in spring 2017. The Center, under the direction of a Director, will support College-wide eLearning and pedagogical practices for online, hybrid, and web-enhanced course delivery (DR CB-78-2016).

### **3.4 Supporting a Student-Centered Culture**

Nurturing a climate that encourages faculty/student interaction outside the classroom is part of Suffolk County Community College's vision (DR Principal Documents, College Mission and Vision) to maintain an enriched learning environment that is student-centered and conducive to



academic success. To support its challenging programs and excellent classroom instruction, the College provides multiple resources, academic support services, and co-curricular learning opportunities that enhance the college experience. More specific information regarding resources, academic support services, and the assessment of student learning is contained in Standards IV and V.

Beyond these general resources, the College also provides academic support services for students with additional needs. For example, the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) (DR III, 4, Educational Opportunity Program) and Student Support Services (DR III, 4, Student Support Services) provide resources for students with demonstrated need for additional academic preparation and financial assistance, or who are facing economic, social, or cultural barriers to higher education. On an annual basis the College provides 155 students in EOP and 263 in TRIO with services including tutoring, financial guidance, academic mentoring and advisement, career and transfer assistance, and academic support workshops. These academic support programs are an important part of student success at the College. For example, in 2015-16 Good Academic Standing (GAS) rate for our TRIO participants was 95%. (DR-Student Services 2015-2016 Reporting Year).

The College's Honors Program (DR III, 4, Honors Program) offers enriched, interdisciplinary learning opportunities for academically talented and highly motivated students; the program also provides priority registration assistance as well as career and transfer counseling. With 550-600 honors students in an average year, it is the largest community college Honors Program in the SUNY system. Other examples of student populations that may require specialized support, including veterans, parents of young children, and the disabled, are further discussed in Standard IV.

In addition to providing academic resources, tutoring, and support services, the College offers a wide array of co-curricular learning opportunities that support student academic progress and advance its mission. In the arts areas, each campus houses an art gallery (DR III, 4, Art Galleries) that showcases work by both local artists and the College's visual arts students and faculty; the Ammerman Campus music department sponsors several ensembles that are open to students, faculty, staff, and community members; and the Theatre Production Program (DR III, 4, Theatre

productions) provides students the opportunity to perform and experience high quality theatrical productions. Multicultural programming is offered through the offices of Campus Activities (DR III, 4, Campus Activities), and is augmented by events such as Women's Week (organized by the Women's and Gender Studies faculty) (DR, III, 4, Women's Week Schedule) and presentations by The Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding (DR III, 4 Center on the Holocaust, Diversity, Human Understanding). Faculty in philosophy (DR III, 4, Philosophy Conferences), English (DR III, 4 Creative Writing Festival), humanities (DR III, 4, Digital Humanities), and mathematics (DR III, 4, Math Conferences) have organized and secured funding for academic conferences hosted at the College, providing students with the opportunity to interact with outside experts in the disciplines.

Additionally, in April 2017, the College hosted the SUNY Undergraduate Research Conference (DR III, 4, SURC), an event that highlighted research projects by undergraduate students from across the state. The College also offers a variety of applied learning opportunities. The Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education (DR, III, 4, Career Services) coordinates cooperative education and internship courses in 16 major academic areas (DR III, 4, CEI Courses); the office also provides workshops and other resources related to resume development, interviewing, and workplace and networking skills. In addition to these efforts to link student learning experiences to potential employment, a recent SUNY-mandated applied learning inventory (DR III, 1, Applied Learning Inventory) 4,052 students in 2016-2017 documented taking a number of College courses that integrate other forms of applied learning, including clinical and field work, service learning, research, and creative work as well as not-for-credit applied learning experiences (DR-Applied Learning Type 2016-2017).

### **3.5 Faculty Matters**

Faculty expertise informs the coherent design of the learning opportunities Suffolk County Community College provides to its students, and that same expertise is essential for the effective delivery of those opportunities.

The College maintains the quality of instruction, in part, through the criteria for hiring (DR III, 2b, Search Committee Procedures) and promotion of classroom faculty, both full-time and adjunct, and other professionals who provide learning experiences to students. (DR III, 2c, FASCC Contract Appendix I). Newly hired faculty are observed regularly until tenured, and then again at each

promotion step. The criteria (DR III, 2a, Performance Criteria) for continuing appointment and promotion of full-time classroom faculty include demonstrated meritorious performance of teaching, College or community service, and professional growth and development (DR III, 2e, Promotion Statistics); Adjunct faculty are evaluated on the performance of their teaching and other professional duties, with optional consideration given to service and professional development (DR III, 2a, Adjunct Promotion Criteria). Promotion forms, including appropriate criteria, are posted on both the College (DR III, 2a, SCCC- Documents, Forms and Policies) and Faculty Association (DR III, 2a, FASCC Promotion Page) websites.

The College employs approximately 320 full-time instructional faculty and 1,585 adjunct instructional faculty (IPEDS submission Human Resources 2015-2016), which allows the College to maintain an average class size of 23 and a low student-to-faculty ratio of 25:1 (IPEDS submission 2015 Fall Enrollment). Although the College has made deliberate efforts to maintain its full-time faculty, during the fall 2016 semester, 48% of the College’s day sections were taught by adjunct faculty; that number rose to 65% for evening and weekend sections (**ROA 15**).

**Table 3.1 Fall 2017 Full-time and Part-time Instructional Faculty by Rank**

	Full time	Part time	Total
Professor	127	101	228
Associate Professor	64	359	423
Assistant Professor	96	106	202
Instructor	19	631	650
	306	1197	1503

Source: IPEDS Data Center/ODS Banner Files

<https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/Facsimile.aspx?unitid=aeb1b1aeb4b0>

The College supports many opportunities for faculty and administrators to pursue professional growth, including sabbaticals, retraining and development, and reimbursement for conference attendance (DR III, 2d, Faculty Resources Web Page); funding is also available for adjuncts (DR III, 2a, Adjunct Services Forms) to attend conferences or pursue other professional development. The College provides full-time FA and Guild of Administrative Officers employees \$1,700 every two years to attend conferences. In the 2016 fiscal year, the College spent approximately \$434,000 on travel and employee training (Contractual Travel 2016). The College also regularly provides professional development workshops, both College-wide and at the campus level, and each campus

maintains a Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) to provide pedagogical resources for faculty (DR III, 2d, Grant TLC; Ammerman TLC; Eastern TLC). The Michael J. Grant Campus also has a standing Pedagogy Committee (DR III, 2d, Grant Campus Pedagogy Committee Web Page), which has developed Faculty Learning Communities, among other initiatives to support instructional improvement. Each semester, the College invites faculty and staff to a Professional Development Day (DR III, 2d, March\_2017\_PPD\_Program), with rotating topics on pedagogy, assessment, and student engagement. The Center for Innovative Pedagogy (DR III, 2 d, College Brief #78-2017 Office of Instructional Technology) regularly holds workshops on the use of the Blackboard platform for online instruction and course enhancement, just as the eLearning Faculty Fellowship Academy provides more extensive training in online pedagogy (DR III, 2d, eLearning Memo). The College also provides faculty with electronic access to a variety of webinars and pedagogical resources, including *The Teaching Professor* and Magna's *Monday Morning Mentor* series (DR III, 2d, Faculty and Professional Advancement). Such opportunities are also faculty-conceived and organized: for example, "The Write Time" provides the College community with a peaceful, distraction-free space and hours to do the writing and research needed to complete individual scholarship, artistic work, and thesis writing.

Although Suffolk County Community College is primarily a teaching institution, many faculty have impressive records of publication, creative performance, and other accomplishments in their discipline fields. These accomplishments were recognized as part of the spring Professional Development Day program (DR III, 2a, Celebrating Our Accomplishments). Acknowledgement of these accomplishments communicates that learning experiences at the College are delivered by a distinguished professorate with recognized expertise in their disciplines. Another example of the accomplishments of the College's academic professionals is that over 170 current and retired faculty members and administrators have received prestigious SUNY Chancellor's Awards for Excellence in teaching, service, and other areas (DR III, 2d, Catalog, Chancellor's Awardees).

## **Recommendation(s)**

- The College should collaborate with governance and the Faculty Association to implement a College-wide course evaluation system which will provide students' feedback regarding

their educational experience and to incorporate that feedback into the design and delivery of its courses.

- The College should find ways to improve the online student support services to improve the online educational experiences and increase student success rates to approach face-to-face instruction success rates.

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the criteria specified in Middle States Accreditation Standard III and reaffirms its commitment to student learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. Further, all learning experiences are consistent with higher education expectations. Students have multiple opportunities to engage in learning experiences throughout the College and support is offered through various modalities. Additionally, the College has well-documented procedures in place for the thoughtful development and improvement of rigorous courses and programs. Through clearly defined procedures for the hiring, tenuring, and promotion of faculty and administrators, the College ensures that the learning opportunities it provides are developed, delivered, and assessed by qualified academic professionals. Through the development and assessment of comprehensive academic services, the College nurtures a student-centered culture that supports access and success in a diverse range of disciplines and programs.

## **STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

*Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.*

### **Overview**

During the course of the past several years, the College has placed enhanced emphasis on ensuring that all students are presented with a full student experience while enrolled at Suffolk. This has required many shifts and changes, both to the structure and the types of initiatives that have been developed and implemented within the College. These policies and activities cohere with the College's Institutional Goals of Student Success, Access and Affordability, and Diversity.

### **Findings and Discussion**

#### **4.1 Admissions and Enrollment**

Information on the College's admissions policies and procedures can be found in the printed and online catalog and on the College's admissions web pages. The institution has clearly stated policies regarding the acceptance of students in both open access and restricted programs. Those applying to restricted programs can find these requirements in the curricula section of the catalog under the individual programs (DR IV, 1). A full listing of academic programs and requirements is regularly updated and available online (DR, IV, 1).

#### **4.2 Prospective Students**

To ensure that the College provides educational opportunities for all members of the community, prospective students who have graduated from high school or who have an equivalency diploma are admitted to an appropriate program. Those who do not have a high school credential can be admitted under the Ability to Benefit Program. In alignment with the Fair Chance Higher Education Pledge and the vote by the State University of New York Board of Trustees, Suffolk County Community College has removed questions regarding felony convictions from the admissions

application and has updated the necessary admissions workflow to appropriately gather the information when necessary.

The admissions processes for new and transfer students, readmits, students without a high school diploma, and international students are clearly defined and outlined in the Enrollment Guide (DR, IV, 1). All prospective students can meet individually with an admissions counselor to discuss their educational goals and devise an individualized plan to attain these goals. Additional support is provided to prospective students for highly competitive programs, such as Nursing, through informational workshops. All students who provide official transcripts of previous credit are notified via mail regarding credits accepted and their allocation (DR, IV, 2). Further details regarding these processes can be found online <https://www.sunysuffolk.edu/apply-enroll/transfer-students/> (DR, IV, 2).

Extensive marketing activities are implemented to support the College's enrollment management efforts. Through a variety of platforms, staff from the offices of Institutional Advancement and Student Affairs develop creative ways of communicating with potential students from Suffolk County. Media, direct mail, geo-fencing with mobile ads, e-blasts, invitations to Open House events, and outreach to the high school guidance community are just a few of the approaches that have enabled the College to connect with prospective students seeking to learn more about the College's programs and opportunities.

An assessment of the Open House program (DR, IV, 6) showed that attendees believed the College would prepare them for their goals and were impressed with the faculty and facilities. The results of another survey of accepted students (DR, IV, 6) indicated that 85% of respondents found requested information was helpful, and 83% said the materials increased their understanding of the admissions process.

2016 saw major changes to the landscape of higher education on Long Island. Two local private colleges (Briarcliffe College and Dowling College) both announced plans to close in coming years. As a result, the Office of Institutional Advancement worked closely with Enrollment Management to communicate with students and external constituencies to let them know Suffolk could help them

transition to an environment where they would be inspired to achieve their educational goals. Outreach strategies included an innovative "Geo-Precise" mobile-based campaign that sent advertising messages underscoring the benefits of transferring to Suffolk.

Part of the College's strategic focus includes building and maintaining a healthy pipeline of prospective students. This begins when tomorrow's future applicants are still in middle school. Through outreach to schools, churches, and non-profits the College has initiated a calendar of coordinated visits by middle schoolers and high schoolers to its campuses. There were recent visits by students from Central Islip School District, the Urban League of Long Island Summer Youth Employment Program, Wyandanch School District, and Hampton Bays School District. As part of their visit, students tour the campus and hear age-appropriate presentations made by College representatives from admissions, financial aid, academic affairs, and student affairs.

Through the Office of Academic Affairs, the College has also been expanding the number of partnerships that are in place with area high schools. Suffolk has seen aggressive growth in the establishment of new Early College and Excelsior program agreements. The Excelsior Program is a concurrent enrollment program which offers credentialed credit-bearing college courses to motivated high school juniors and seniors at their high school, taught by their faculty. The Early College Program enrolls high school students in courses on Suffolk campuses that are taught by Suffolk faculty. During the past academic year, these combined programs, have generated 16,000 Suffolk County Community College credits, positively impacting enrollment (DR-SCCC Excelsior Program Highlights).

#### **4.3 New Student Testing, Advising and Orientation**

Suffolk currently has a multi-phased approach to familiarizing new students with the College. Admissions personnel review all aspects of new students' applications, including high school transcripts, standardized testing scores, and competency based assessments such as AP and CLEP. Where applicable, students may also be required to take the College Placement Test (CPT) for placement in English, reading, and math. All students who take the CPT are surveyed about their perception of their level of preparedness, the means of communicating the importance of preparation, and the most utilized study tool. Through the 2015-2016 annual assessment, 16% of



incoming students were not aware of available study materials and 25.3% of incoming students reported preparing for the exam (DR, IV, 6). Through intentional outreach regarding exam preparation, the 2016-2017 assessment found that 52% of students reported preparing for the exam. As a result of this assessment, improvements were made in communication about the use of study materials and in working with high school staff to ensure students are aware of the test.

Once admitted, students are welcomed to the College through a comprehensive on-boarding process. After information sessions, new students meet with a counselor to review their CPT results and discuss courses, majors, and goals. Students are referred to support areas to enhance and encourage their success and retention at Suffolk, such as financial aid, academic support, career services, scholarships, disability services, honors, TRIO, and EOP. In addition, students are scheduled for formal orientation, which emphasizes community building, campus resources, and academic and student supports. In 2017, the College introduced virtual campus tours and a virtual orientation option as well. The virtual orientation was designed as an easily accessed resource to assist students seeking information as they move through the student experience at Suffolk.

#### **4.4 Academic Advising and Priority Registration**

A key aspect of how faculty shape the learning environment for their students is through advising and mentoring. To augment the services provided by the College's counseling faculty, full-time teaching faculty are required by contract to provide formal academic advising hours each semester. However, important mentoring opportunities also occur through less formal interactions between students and faculty.

Creating a culture of mentoring was one of the objectives of the College's most recent Title III Grant Project: Student Engagement through Informed Support (SEIS) (DR III, 4, Title III). An innovation of this project that the College has institutionalized is the establishment of Academic Advising and Mentoring Centers (AAMC) on each of the College's campuses (DR III, 3, Academic Advising Centers Welcome to the AAMC). These centers bring together students seeking academic advising with teaching faculty who can provide needed mentorship. This service assists students in selecting coursework that is more coherently attuned to their ultimate academic and career objectives. Advising tools include the advising handbook, retest policies, recommended course lists, SUNY general education requirements, and videos on how to utilize the SAIN (Student

Advisement Information Notice). In 2016-17, almost 9,000 students utilized the AAMCs on the Ammerman, Eastern, and Michael J. Grant campuses and results from an exit survey given to Grant campus students indicated that they found their experience in the center to be very effective.

Additionally, Priority Registration gives currently and previously enrolled students the opportunity to register for classes well before the onset of open registration. Students are assigned a registration date based on the total number of credits completed and matriculation status. They are also directed toward support and academic advisement by services such as the counseling center, academic offices, TRIO, EOP, disability services, and the AAMCs on each campus.

The Campus Registrar's offices assist students with all activities related to their registration, including adding, dropping, and withdrawal from classes during the semester. Registration information is communicated to students through student portal (MySCCC) announcements and email, the College website home page, College catalog, television and newspaper advertisements, and signage displayed during key enrollment periods. The College also uses a text messaging system through School Messenger and a mobile application through Ellucian that allows access to campus maps, calendars, and events, as well as access to the student portal.

As technology and communication methods expand it is critical for the process for prospective and current students to adjust to ensure that students are receiving vital information to support their success. Through a communication assessment, students indicated their preferred method of communication is text message and email. Through a multiple response option, 53% of student respondents indicated they "love it" when communication from the college is received via text message and 54% indicated they "love it" when communication is received via email. 65% of student respondents indicated they utilize their student portal daily and 94% report having a smart phone. While students indicate their love for technology, not all of our technology is being fully utilized. For example, in total there are only 2858 individuals utilizing the Suffolk mobile application, this number is inclusive of students, alumni, faculty, staff and parents. From the start of fall 2017 through November 27, 2017, an average of 3232 students read their email messages from the college. This represents 14% of the current enrollment. In fall 2015 10.64% of meal plans went unused, in fall 2016 10.45% of meal plans went unused and in fall 2017 7.45% of meals plans went unused. As indicated in the assessment, it is essential that the College continue to expand and

grow our technology based communication methods and develop intentional practices to inform students of the opportunities to communicate with the College via technology.

#### 4.5 Developmental Resources

As an open access institution, the College enrolls a significant number of students in need of additional support to be prepared for college-level coursework. Through purposeful review, including a collaboration between academic and student affairs, consideration of placement scores guidelines, amended retesting policies, holistic placement, and professional development, this number has decreased by 8.6% since 2010-11 (DR, IV, 1b).

**Table 4.1 Developmental Placement by Academic Year**

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Developmental Placements*	3,467	3,360	3,340	3,275	3,168
Percent change from 2010		-3.1%	-3.7%	-5.5%	-8.6%

\*Unduplicated: Includes Reading, English and Math

Source: SCCC Factbook January 2017

To foster the success of students who have been identified as needing extra support, all developmental, probation, ATB, and EOP students must meet with an advisor before registration. Students identified as needing a developmental placement are required to meet with an advisor before registering for courses. Course limits may be placed on students needing multiple developmental courses to ensure proficiency in these areas. Students can retest based on institutional guidelines. The 2015-2016 assessment found that 37% of students who retested were able to advance at least one level based on the new test scores. The guidelines are continuously reviewed through a collaboration between student affairs and Developmental Studies.

Committee efforts to increase the number of retests have resulted in a decrease in the number of students required to complete developmental coursework (DR, IV, 1b). All students have access to free College resources such as the library (brick and mortar as well as virtual), computer labs, and tutoring. Moreover, attendance and leave policies have also been established for all students to ensure appropriate educational goals are attained (DR, IV, 1b).

#### **4.6 Financial Support**

Financial aid is critical in supporting students as they pursue their educational goals. In total, 65% of Suffolk students are eligible for this aid. The Office of Financial Aid provides comprehensive information regarding expenses, financial aid options, maintaining satisfactory academic progress, refunds, loans, and repayment. Financial aid is further discussed in Standard II.

In 2009, the College's student loan default rate was 16.4%. Through a concerted effort orchestrated by the Office of Financial Aid, a review of the most recent available data (2014) shows that the student loan default rate has been reduced to 10.0%. This dramatic improvement is the result of a Loan Default Prevention Plan that decreased the number of loans processed at the College, as the campus Financial Aid Offices encouraged students to minimize borrowing. Financial Aid professional staff assist students in one-on-one sessions to consider other options to help pay for school, such as applying for scholarships. In 2013-2014 only 13% of our total student enrollment received a student loan, and 71% of our 2014 graduates left the College debt-free.

The annual assessment for Financial Aid also includes a focus on the maintenance of satisfactory academic progress. Through intentional programming, outreach, and advisement, the College's Financial Aid Office implemented a process through which all students receiving financial aid who attempted to drop or withdraw from a course are required to meet with a counselor to determine how such an action would impact their current and future financial aid (DR, IV, 1a). As a result, in fall 2016 only 15% of the financial aid population did not meet Satisfactory Academic Progress. Of those who did not meet Satisfactory Academic Progress, 31% were able to successfully appeal, which is an increase of 7% from fall 2015.

The Suffolk Community College Foundation awards more than \$625,000 in scholarships to incoming, continuing, and graduating Suffolk students. Whether it's smaller, department-based awards or major scholarships such as the *Get There From Here* and *Stay on Long Island Initiative/New York State Presidential Scholarships*, the College provides excellent opportunities to assist students financially. In order to increase student applications for internal scholarship opportunities, the College implemented a new web-based system, Academic Works, in 2017. Through this software, students can access scholarship information within the student portal on the

College website, apply for multiple scholarship opportunities simultaneously, and search for College scholarships based on specific criteria. A positive result of this new infusion of technology is a 50% increase in the number of scholarship applications received. (DR, IV, 1a) This increase continues to demonstrate the need to advance the College use of technology to enhance communication and interactions with students.

**Table 4.2 Institutional Scholarships Awarded 2013-2016**

Year	Recipients	Funds Awarded
2016	497	\$629,384
2015	472	\$618,682
2014	482	\$560,586
2013	403	\$432,922

Source: Institutional Effectiveness Reports (2015-2016/2014-2015/2013-2014)

#### 4.7 Additional Support Services

Through continuous improvement and recognition of changing student demographics, the following services to support students in reaching their educational goals have been developed or enhanced by the College over the past three years:

- *The Office of Veterans Affairs:* Suffolk County is home to the largest population of veterans in New York State, and has one of the largest veteran population of any county in the United States. The College enrolls over 700 military-connected students each academic year and has a long history of assisting veterans in maximizing their educational benefits, as well as successfully helping them transition to college life and the workplace.
  - Through grant funds awarded to the Foundation, the College was able to establish and staff a Veterans Resource Center on each campus.
  - Each campus has active student veterans clubs.
  - The College sent representatives to the White House to speak before top leaders from the Department of Veterans Affairs, representatives from national organizations serving veterans, and staff members from the administration, advocating for why community colleges are the best option for veterans in transition.

- *Mental Health Services*: In the spirit of promoting a safe and secure learning environment for the entire college community, in 2015 the College implemented a student mental health services support program. This program provides appropriate assessment, treatment, and referral for students experiencing emotional or mental distress. By providing these services, the College is working to decrease the risk of student self-harm and suicide, and the possibility of harm to others
- *Differently Abled Students*: In order to meet the needs of an increasing number of students requiring special services, the Office of Disability Services increased professional development for faculty and staff, developed more accessible testing accommodations, and increased advocacy efforts for students with special needs (DR, IV, 1d).
- *English as Second Language/English Language Learning*. ESL/ELL are essential programs for many non-native English speaking students at the College seeking proficiency in English language literacy. ESL/ELL programs offer students personal tutoring, mentoring, and credit-bearing classes. Additionally, the programs offer online tutorial/learning objects, student workshops, events, and student advisement (DR, IV, 1d).
- *Multicultural Affairs*: Over the past several years, the College has worked to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion across the institution. President McKay has directed that the College invest resources in support of developing and promoting best practices for building a consistent appreciation for the many facets of difference that exist within the College community and are reflective of Suffolk County. These include
  - Designating an Assistant Director of Campus Activities and Multicultural Affairs for each campus.
  - Establishing the Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding, the director of which is responsible for coordinating multicultural affairs programming and activities across the campuses.
  - Creating a Presidential Multicultural Affairs Committee that will meet twice a semester or as needed to discuss College-wide programming and campus-based programming.
  - Establishing an LGBTQ Task Force.
- Office of Career Services: Launched [Purple Briefcase](#), an online career platform tool that provides resources for career and internship opportunities for Suffolk students.

#### **4.8 Co-Curricular Programs**

In accordance with the College mission, students have the opportunity to participate in a broad array of intercollegiate athletics, campus and College intramural athletics, campus activities and student leadership development, multicultural affairs, visual arts, music ensembles, and theater productions. There are 22 athletic teams and 11 intramural programs. In 2015-2016, SCCC athletics was ranked #1 in the county at the Division III NJCAA level by the National Association of Two Year College Athletic Administrators. (DR, IV, 4). Additionally, there are 167 student organizations including honor societies, student newspapers, literary magazines, student government, and campus programming (DR, IV, 1c). Furthermore, students are provided with opportunities to engage in civic and community activities:

- Students have volunteered for alternative Spring Break experiences: 1) Students worked with Feed America San Diego and Father Joe's Village, helping with hunger relief, 2) Students volunteered with the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve, helping to eliminate invasive species, 3) Students volunteered with Habitat for Humanity, providing those in need with affordable shelter.
- In response to an urgent need for blood, the Ammerman, Grant, and Eastern campuses hosted successful blood drives.
- In addition to its theatre arts programming, the College has hosted its Long Island Shakespeare Festival for more than 15 years, offering free public performances of abridged works by Shakespeare.

Financial support for these programs and services comes from the Student Activity Fee, which is paid each semester by registered students. The Suffolk Community College Association, Inc. is a non-profit auxiliary services corporation whose primary purpose is to oversee co-curricular programs and services which directly benefit the students of the College. The SCC Association promotes, supports, and enhances programs and services which are educational, cultural, recreational, and/or social in nature. These opportunities are regulated by a Board of Directors who oversee the SCC Association and manage the policy and procedures which are inclusive of a code of ethics, business and finance, students, independent contractors, fundraising and the administration of the Student Activity Fee through the college and campus association advisory

committee. The principles of the SCC Association align with and support the principles of the institution (IV, 4).

#### 4.9 Library

To support student academic progress, access to library services is facilitated by physical library spaces at each campus, including two capital projects: the Montaukett Learning Resource Center on the Eastern Campus (DR III, 4, Montaukett LRC) and the recent construction of a learning resource center on the Michael J. Grant Campus (DR III, 4, Grant LRC). Each library maintains flexible hours, including evenings and weekends, and provides numerous programs, services, and outreach efforts focused on supporting students in reaching their educational goals.

Due to the changing nature of the information landscape, in the fall of 2017 the campus libraries participated in a strategic planning process that culminated in the development of a Library Strategic Plan document to better align changes and innovations in library resources and services with the College Mission and goals. Students have access to print and electronic resources (Table 4.3) through direct library purchases as well as content accessible through the College’s participation in the SUNY shared resource initiative, *SUNYCONNECT*.

**Table 4.3 Library holdings and accessible titles 2015-16**

Print Books	E-books purchased	E-book Accessible through SUNY Collections (Full-text)	Databases	Journals (print and electronic)
176,167	689	164,779	91	>12,000 titles

The College subscribes to various online databases, which are assessed annually based on usage and other criteria to determine renewals and cancellations. In addition to electronic databases and journals, the library continues to expand streaming video content through the purchase of such high-demand services as Films on Demand, Kanopy, and Swank to support the needs of various courses and programs. The use of online resources continued to grow in 2015-16. There were 442,551 inquiries in the library databases, an increase of 81.26% from 2011-12. There were 257,963 inquiries on the library research guides, which represents an increase of 70.65%.



To further student access to these scholarly resources, the library purchased access to the EBSCO Discovery Service, which provides students with a simplified method to use one search to cull through multiple databases and the library catalog. Based on student focus group results, this one search option has been set as the default search on the library webpage. In addition to offering a wide range of resources, the three campus libraries provide students with reference service via telephone, email, and in person consultations.

To further assist students with using library resources and citation management, the library created the Library YouTube channel, various guides, and videos which are heavily accessed resources (Table 4.4).

**Table 4.4 Top Four Library Guides Accessed in 2016-17**

Library Guide	Number of Hits
Citations	13,962
Nursing	6,743
Careers	5,047
PSY101	3,376

The library’s ongoing and incremental instruction of information literacy skills exemplifies the enhancement of achievement of students’ educational goals. Students are taught essential research skills that aid in degree completion and transfer to other institutions. The mandatory College seminar library orientation ensures that all full-time students receive an introduction to library services and basic research techniques. Student learning outcomes are assessed through the completion of an information literacy skills assignment. Students build upon the skills introduced in College Seminar in many courses that incorporate an additional library instruction session. Librarians also teach college credit information literacy courses that educate students on how to complete research at the college level.

The library continues to assess new methods of information literacy instruction such as a group teaching modality introduced by the Ammerman campus librarians. In a recent assessment, college seminar instructors were asked about their perceptions of the group versus traditional lecture format

of the information literacy instruction sessions. The assessment found that of the 15 instructors who responded, 14 preferred the new group teaching modality. The second part of this assessment will investigate a new approach to teaching critical thinking skills as a follow up to a 2015 College Seminar assessment that found only 67% of the students met or exceeded the information literacy standard of critical thinking.

#### **4.10 Support for Student Retention, Persistence, and Completion**

In recent years, the College has sought to improve student retention, persistence, and completion through a number of new initiatives. A strong proponent of equity, President McKay supported Suffolk's selection as a member of the 2016 cohort for Achieving the Dream (AtD). This national effort seeks to close achievement gaps, accelerate student success, and enhance student completion among diverse student populations. AtD's focus on using evidence-based, student-centered approaches as a method for infusing values of equity and excellence throughout an institution was launched in a coordinated fashion across the College. Student data was analyzed by members of the College's core and data teams and was then shared with the College community. The data served to inform discussions related to the College's mission and the concept of student success. The College is currently examining options for enhancing the student experience across the various touchpoints where they interact with faculty, staff, and administrators as part of day to day processes. During the fall of 2017, the College community will determine Suffolk's approach for effecting intentional changes that will lead to institutional improvement and advancement toward its Mission. In fall 2017, based on the data found through the AtD process, the College will focus on the retention of African American students and part-time students.

The College's Title III project, *Student Engagement through Informed Support (SEIS)*, implemented in phases during the five-year term of the grant (2010-2015), reached its conclusion during the fall 2015 semester. Through various initiatives supported by our faculty, staff, and administrators, the SEIS project engaged and supported students by electronically enabling enrollment and admissions.

- Reorganizing and improving faculty academic advising.
- Instituting an academic early warning and intervention system.
- Developing repositories of online learning objects for 20 high-enrollment gateway courses.

Overall, SEIS has helped the College to transform the way students enroll, are counseled and advised, and receive support. It has impacted students, faculty members, and support services providers on all three campuses. As a result of this grant, staff across our campuses are more adept at examining and refining common processes in order to make improvements to better serve students. (DR-Title III-Year-Five Report).

The Student Engagement Plan 2016-2019 is the result of the work of many individuals across the College. The goal of the student engagement plan is to support student persistence through meaningful, purposeful, faculty and staff-driven initiatives that engage our at-risk populations in order to increase student success (Appendix G: Student Engagement Plan 2016-2019).

Several College-wide initiatives have been developed to help foster a sense of college identity and solidarity. In 2011, the campus athletics programs merged into one College-wide athletic program. To further unify the community around college sports teams and events, in 2015 the College unveiled its first mascot, “Finn” the Shark. In the spring of 2016, a survey was administered to assess how the presence of Finn may be changing the culture at Suffolk. The survey concluded that upwards of 93% of the students either “strongly agree” or “agree” that Finn has improved school spirit, and 90% of the students “strongly agree” or “agree” that the mascot helped foster a full-college experience (DR-SCCC Mascot Survey).

In 2014, the concept of Spirit Week was introduced on all three of the College’s campuses. This initiative offers students opportunities to learn more about their school’s history, to review their educational plans, and to engage in a various Community Service opportunities. For several years, the College has hosted Finish Strong Week as a way of celebrating students and providing resources that will help them successfully complete their educational goals. The microsite connected with the finish strong program received 772 hits and the campus tables outreached to approximately 3,000 (the number of promotional food that was distributed) students. Through this retention initiative, faculty, staff, and administrators demonstrate their appreciation for our students in numerous ways, including urging students to take advantage of advisory meetings with professors, speaking with counselors, seeking tutoring assistance, securing a summer job/internship, applying for financial aid, participating in Priority Registration for summer and fall semesters, and applying for graduation (DR, IV, 1d). The College has expanded, redesigned, and reaffirmed agreements

with four-year institutions that facilitate and expedite the process transfer. This is done in many ways such as joint admission, articulation agreements, transfer days, college fairs, on-site advising by the four-year institutions, and transfer counseling (IV, Id). In addition, the College coordinates and promotes college visits for its transferring students through an initiative called “Position Your Transition.” Working in conjunction with the admissions offices at participating four-year institutions, Suffolk arranges for groups of 20-50+ students to visit Long Island based four-year institutions in which they are interested for transfer admission. The assessments of the program indicates that 85% of students report that as a result of the trip they plan to apply to the transfer institution. Counselors responsible for supporting the transfer process utilized their assessment plan to strengthen outreach to students about the transfer process. In the 2014-15 assessment, 64.6% of student respondents indicated that they had met with a transfer counselor. This was the lowest overall response to the survey. Through intentional intervention, including tabling, website promotion, brochure development, and campus digital advertising, the transfer counselors are working to improve student knowledge. In 2016-17 the student response remained at 64% and as a result they have been granted funds to mail all matriculated students with 36 credits completed a postcard regarding opportunities for support in the transfer process.

#### **4.11 Continuous Improvement and Assessment**

All student service areas engage in unit reviews as well as annual assessments. Further, to continuously improve the process of enrollment, engagement, and goal attainment, the Office of Student Affairs appointed a College Assistant Dean for Student Engagement Assessment. The responsibilities of this position include measuring the effectiveness of initiatives within the division, including co-curricular student learning outcomes, student engagement, retention, and student success. The dean also assists with all unit reviews, identifies needs, and recommends new and/or improved services based on analytical data.

Since 2013, 14 AES units have completed Program Reviews at the College. All Student Affairs units follow the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS). Examples of recent improvements resulting from assessment include a new centralized structure for Career Services, increased access to immunization databases for Health Services to support student enrollment, staffing realignment and reclassification in Public Safety, additional promotional materials for

Transfer services, as well as a redesigned organizational structure for the Registrar. In addition, budget funds were secured to address new space allocation and technology needs approved for disability services. Additional information on AES assessment is located in Standard VI. (DR, IV, 6).

The College uses the SUNY Student Opinion Survey to ascertain student satisfaction with their experiences at Suffolk. The SUNY Student Opinion Survey is offered every three years and is designed to gauge student quality of life at SUNY institutions. The College administers the survey and reviews the comparative data to other SUNY community colleges. The most recent administration of the survey was in 2016 (Appendix K, Student Opinion Survey 2016 report).

The results of the recent survey were used to gauge progress on Institutional Goal 5, Communication “To promote transparent and effective communication within the College community and between the College community and its external constituencies.” Overall findings of the survey indicated high rankings compared to the other SUNY community colleges in regard to satisfaction with *College Programs and Experiences*, and *College Contribution to Growth and Learning*. Lower rankings were given to availability of academic advisors, availability of advising tools, parking, and impression of quality before attending. The College continues to address advising and the need for increased support to this area, and anticipates that Achieving the Dream action items will include activities that will strengthen College outcomes related to enrollment through to completion, inclusive of advising (**ROA 10**).

#### **4.12 Student Information and Records**

Beyond enrollment commitment, engagement, and goal attainment process, the institution ensures full compliance with all expectations regarding student records. The College policy on maintaining student records is in full accordance with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). All full-time and part-time employees are mandated to complete Human Resource training, including FERPA training, through an online module system, Workplace Answers. This training began College-wide in fall 2014 and continues to develop professional competencies for new and continuing employees. The central registrar facilitates ongoing training for all student service offices and acts as a conduit for internal and external constituents to access student records about directory information, curriculum progress, and confidential records (DR, IV, 3).

## **Recommendation(s)**

- The College should continue to refine processes to support student retention and based on our AtD information focus on African American and part-time students.
- The College should enhance the onboarding processes to educate students about communication technology while increasingly leveraging technology to communicate with prospective, new and current students.

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the criteria specified in Middle States Accreditation Standard IV and reaffirms its commitment to support of the student experience. The Self-Study provided the student support areas the opportunity to review, reflect, and discuss critical ways students are supported at Suffolk County Community College. The overall findings will provide substantive input for further planning and discussion related to Achieving the Dream action items. Continuous improvements and assessments are aligned with the unit and College goals for outcomes that support the advancement of student success. Students have an abundance of opportunities and services in place to support both their academic and student life pursuits, and these services are provided with purpose and pride.

# STANDARD V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

*Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution’s students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution’s mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.*

## Overview

Suffolk County Community College prepares students for success by ensuring their readiness to transfer into four-year degree programs, enter the workforce, or advance in their current career by providing sound educational experiences. Through the careful construction of degree and certificate programs, each with clearly articulated course and program learning outcomes, students are given the tools they need to achieve their individual goals. Outcomes are regularly assessed at the course, program, and institutional level, allowing for ongoing improvement and assessment of the student experience. These assessment practices are key components in supporting the College’s Institutional Goals of Student Success, Institutional Effectiveness, and Communication.

**Table 5.1 Academic and Administrative Support Unit Assessment Cycle/Timeline**

Academic Program Review	7 years or outside accreditation cycle
Institutional Educational Goals	5 years
General Education Assessment	3 year cycle
Program Learning Outcomes	5 year cycle
Course Assessment	Variable
AES Unit Review	7 years
AES Assessment of Outcomes	7 years

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **5.1 Institutional Support for Educational Effectiveness**

Sustainable, quality assessment practices are the foundation for educational effectiveness. In 2013, the College instituted its Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Institutional Effectiveness (CAPIE) (Appendix E), which structures systematic and sustainable assessment practices in use at the College, linking assessment activities to the College's Mission and Vision statements.

Coordination of academic assessment and academic program review is overseen by the Office of Academic Affairs. The office provides regular communication to chairs, program coordinators, and academic deans on College assessment initiatives and professional development opportunities (DR-SCCC Academic Assessment Update). The office also works directly with faculty on program and course assessment planning and implementation. Additionally, it collects assessment plans, curriculum maps, and annual assessment reports and makes them available on the academic assessment webpage that serves as a resource for the College's academic assessment activities.

The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE) provides support for non-academic assessment efforts including the Administrative and Educational Support (AES) Units. It also assists faculty and staff with developing assessment tools, collection of assessment data, and the analysis of data. More information on assessment at the institutional level is discussed in Standard VI.

### **5.2 Institutional Educational Goals and General Education Assessment**

The College's Institutional Educational Goals (IEGs) have been informed by both the SUNY General Education Outcomes and the Middle States essential skills. (DR V, 1, MS Goals Resolution FINAL). The aim of the IEGs is to ensure that every student graduates with competency in the following areas:

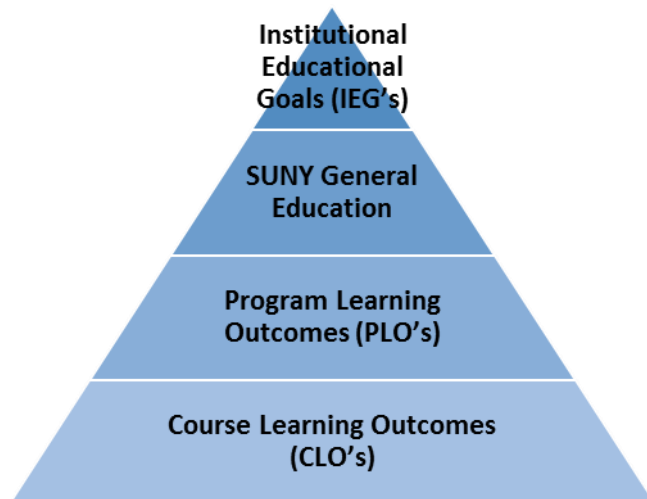
1. Written and Oral Communication.
2. Cultural and Global Awareness and Cultural Sensitivity.
3. Quantitative Reasoning.
4. Scientific Reasoning.
5. Critical Analysis and Reasoning.



6. Technological Reasoning/Information Literacy.
7. Values, Ethics, and Diverse Perspectives.

The IEGs align to each of the SUNY General Education areas, enabling the current General Educational Assessment process, which is overseen by the Faculty General Education Assessment Coordinator, to continue. In spring 2017, curriculum alignment maps were created, allowing academic departments to demonstrate how Program Learning Outcomes connect to IEGs, which will ultimately provide the College a repository of courses that align to the IEGs to use as part of the five-year assessment cycle.

**Figure 3. SCCC Academic Assessment Alignment**



As demonstrated in Figure 3, the alignment of the College's academic assessment processes streamlines student learning outcomes assessment at each level. When a course is assessed, the CLOs, as well as any relevant PLOs, along with SUNY General Education outcomes and IEGs are all assessed simultaneously, allowing for the most efficient use of faculty and staff

resources. The IEG assessment plan (to begin in fall 2017) will expand beyond the approved SUNY General Education courses to include courses in the seven IEG areas in all AA., AS., and AAS programs. (DR V 1 Gen Ed area assessment schedule). The College has a robust general education assessment process that involves appointing a faculty chair and committee to conduct a College-wide assessment. General Education assessment examples include:

- In spring 2017, an assessment of PSY 101: Introduction to Psychology was conducted to address SUNY General Education outcomes related to Social Science and Critical Thinking. The previous assessment had occurred in 2012 and, based on recommendations from that assessment, professional development workshops had been offered to faculty on research methods and biological bases of behavior, a review of textbooks was conducted, a new standard syllabus was established, and the departmental chairpersons collected all

PSY syllabi to ensure that the approved CLOs for the courses were listed. The assessment instrument consisted of multiple choice questions and a written assignment. The students in the 2017 assessment performed better than the students in the 2012 assessment with regard to the learning outcome associated with “Understanding of the methods social scientists use to explore social phenomena...” In the 2012 assessment 68.4% of students met or exceeded this outcome, while in 2017 a total of 76% of students met or exceeded the outcome. This improvement is the result of the changes that were made to the course based on the recommendations of the previous assessment. (DR-PSY 101 Gen Ed Assessment Report-PSY 101)

- The SUNY General Education Outcome for Western Civilization and Critical Thinking was assessed in the course HIS 102: Western Civilization II in spring 2017. This outcome had been previously assessed in HIS 102 in 2013. The 2017 findings indicated that 60 % of the students meet the student learning outcomes for Western Civilization and Critical Thinking (DR-HIS 102 Assessment 2017). The results also demonstrated a small increase in overall student performance from the previous assessment administered in 2013. The increase could be in part due to the actions taken by the History faculty in response to recommendations that were made in 2013 to offer disciplinary conversations and professional development, create an online document database which contains sample assessments made available through the Social Sciences department, and norming the rubric with faculty members prior to the 2017 assessment. While student performance was higher in the 2017 assessment, recommendations were made to provide opportunities for full and part-time faculty to learn historiographical trends and pedagogical techniques, and for enhancement of the document repository to encourage greater similarity in the emphasis on instruction in the interactions between the Western World and other cultures.

### **5.3 Assessment of Student Learning**

Assessment of student learning is led by faculty. Courses are assessed as part of annual assessment of PLOs within academic departments. Courses not associated with programs, such as developmental math, reading, writing, ESL, and College Seminar are also regularly assessed.

Department chairs oversee annual PLO assessments within their programs and complete an annual report of an academic assessment activity, which is then forwarded to the College Dean of Instruction for review and also communicated to stakeholders. Feedback on the annual report is

communicated from the dean directly to department chairs, who share it with faculty. The Academic Assessment Annual Report template was updated in 2016 (Appendix L) to ensure that progress on the previous year’s assessment findings are documented. Department chairs formulate an action plan based on assessment results, and they communicate the results of these course-based assessments to faculty members, setting the stage for discussions on how to use those results to improve teaching and learning. Examples of how assessment results are used to improve student learning appear in the table below (**ROA 9**).

**Table 5.2 Examples of Utilization of Assessment Results from Course-based Assessments**

Course Based Assessment	Finding	Response
COL101 CLO: Students will demonstrate an awareness of relevant academic policies, processes and procedures related to advising, course planning and career exploration (student use of SAIN report was assessed)	65% of students met the CLO (DR V COL 101 Report of Academic Assessment Activity, fall 2015)	College Seminar Advisory Committee produced and distributed to faculty a PowerPoint presentation on findings, hosted workshops on student use of the SAIN, and created college-wide assignment for addressing student use of the SAIN report. <b>At reassessment:</b> 90% of students met the CLO (DR V COL 101 reassessment 2016)
EDU 201 PLO: Students will be able to communicate effectively in writing (student use of APA citation formatting was assessed)	79% of students met the PLO	Instructors asked to include link to Virtual Learning Commons in all course syllabi, incorporation of writing center visits outside of class into course participation grade; incorporation of one entire class consisting of library visit. <b>At reassessment:</b> 82% of students met the PLO (DR V Adolescent Education Report of Assessment Activity)
ENG 010 SLO: Students will apply strategies for prewriting, drafting, revising and proofreading (both in-class and out-of-class papers)	50% of students met the SLO	The following fall semester a Revision Pedagogy workshop was held to provide strategies for teaching revision, to survey faculty on their responses to assessment, and to confirm ongoing assessment plans. <b>At reassessment:</b> 55.2% of students met the SLO (DR V ENG 010 assessment presentation 2016)

BIO 150 CLO: Students will be able to integrate interrelationships of metabolism, genetics, and evolution to other scientific concepts	46% of students met the CLO	Generation of suggested resource list including video tutorials and in-class materials. <b>At reassessment:</b> 67% of students met the CLO (DR V
		BIO 150 reassessment results Spring 2015)
CRJ 209 PLO: Students will be able to analyze and discuss the importance of sensitivity to ethical and multicultural issues as they pertain to criminal justice	76% of students met the PLO	Instructors given specific assignments to utilize in the course to improve student performance on the PLO. <b>At reassessment:</b> 87% of students met the PLO (DR V CRJ Spring 2016-Fall 2016 assessment info)

At the annual Academic Chairs meeting hosted each summer by the Office of Academic Affairs, an update is provided on the previous year's academic assessments, faculty related assessment activities, and goals for the upcoming year. (DR-Academic Chairs Update). While always striving to get 100% completion of academic assessment reports, annually the average completion rate is approximately 90%. The quality of academic assessment continues to improve at the College through recognition of the need for ongoing support and development. To provide continued support for the College's academic assessment process, the following items require ongoing consideration:

- *Communication to Adjunct Faculty:* With the large numbers of adjunct faculty members teaching in the College's programs, it can be challenging to communicate and get assistance in completing assessment projects. Several Academic Chairs have begun preparing instructions for adjuncts on assessment measures and how they are to be administered. This process would benefit from additional college support of professional development for adjunct faculty specifically in providing web based resources.
- *Multi-campus Coordination:* Many programs are offered on all three campuses, which requires collaboration and communication among the program faculty. To address this, faculty from many of Suffolk's largest programs have created Tri-Campus Assessment Committees (i.e., Business, Communication, Physical Sciences, and Mathematics).
- *Academic Assessment Repository:* All academic assessment documents are collected and housed on the College's website and maintained by the Office of Academic Affairs. Although

the location on the [website portal](#) ensures access by all faculty to assessment related reports and materials, it is not efficient to manage. A goal of the Office of Academic Affairs is to explore a platform that could be utilized by faculty for the creation and submission of all assessment documentation. The College is implementing Microsoft 365 in the upcoming year. The creation of a Share Point site in the Microsoft 365 environment is currently being considered for sharing Program Review and Assessment documentation.

#### **5.4 Comprehensive Academic Program Review**

Comprehensive academic program reviews are conducted by faculty every seven years. Program reviews include the participation of external reviewers, and examine such factors as a review of assessment results, proposed actions going forward and how they are related to assessment results, and an examination of resources (**ROA 8**). Findings and recommendations are communicated to the Office of Academic Affairs (DR V 2c, Academic Program Review Template). Beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year the annual academic assessment report template was updated to include a section that documents any progress made during the year on the recommendations. This was done to ensure that during the time period between program reviews, recommendations would be reviewed and any changes would be documented. Over the past few years, the completion of program reviews in one academic year has improved (DR-Program Review List). In 2016, the Office of Academic Affairs began conducting meetings with the relevant campus deans, chairs, and faculty to review the Program review recommendations. These meetings have provided an opportunity for key stakeholders to strategize on how to provide support for the program based on the review and recommendations. Additionally, budgeting requests for program resources is done through the campus executive deans and follows the annual budgeting process described in Standard VI. Examples of recent program reviews that have led to recommendations and program improvement include:

- The 2015-2016 program review of the Chemical Dependency Counseling AAS degree noted that the student enrollment nearly doubled from 2008 and 2015. Despite this increase, the program only had one full-time faculty member, who also served as the program coordinator. The report recommended the hiring of an additional full-time faculty member, which was

completed and implemented in time for the start of the fall 2017 semester (DR-35, 106, Chemical Dependency Counseling Program Review).

- An example of program review that led to ongoing improvements was conducted of the Fitness Specialist, AS degree during the 2012-2013 academic year. The report recommended a detailed review of the curriculum and courses by the new program coordinator and department, due to changes in student educational pursuits and the transferability of courses. Several changes were proposed and implemented, including revision of the course content and credits of Kinesiology to align with four-year college trends. In addition, a new Physical Education Studies AS degree was introduced in fall 2017, to meet student interest and transfer practices (DR -27, 53, Fitness Specialist Program Review & SED letter).
- The Human Services, A.S. program recently completed a program review in 2017. Based on the findings, the committee recommendations included updating the program website, developing marketing strategies for students, and utilizing library resources in class. The external reviewers additionally recommended that the technology being used in HUS 103: Interviewing in Social Work Practice, increase the use of Blackboard by adjunct faculty and consider assessment at the completion of HUS 103 to determine students' field readiness. In response to the recommendations, the program's website has been updated and marketing strategies are being implemented, along with the inclusion of a customized library research session into course HUS 103. Discussions continue on the implementation of the additional recommendations, but this serves as another example of how the Program Review process is maturing at the College and is being used to improve programs (DR\_Human Services Program Review, Presentation).

### **5.5 Administrative and Educational Support Unit Assessment**

The College has 36 AES units organized into three categories, Administrative Support, Educational Support, and Community Outreach units. Every unit conducts an annual review of selected goals, as well as a comprehensive unit review every seven years (See Standard VI). Examples of how assessment findings are used to improve AES units appear below.

**Table 5.3 Examples of Utilization of Assessment Results from AES Unit Reviews and Assessments**

AES Unit Assessment	Findings	Response
<p>Career Services and Cooperative Education College Seminar Presentation SLO: Students will be able to obtain educational and occupational information to aid their career and educational planning as well as the career decision making process</p>	<p>Students were unable to identify services offered by the Office of Career Services</p>	<p>Revision of presentation given to students in COL 101 (DR V Career Services and Cooperative Education College Seminar Presentation 2015-2016 assessment report)</p> <p><b>Reassessment:</b>            Career Services saw an increase to 54% from 32% of students correctly identifying all services offered (or not offered) by Career Services. In further breakdown of the multiple choice question, 97% correctly chose resume revisions, 78% correctly chose job application, 30% correctly did not chose serve as a reference and 97% correctly chose career assessments. (DR Career Services –Assessment Report 2017)</p>
<p>Advising and Testing SLO: Students will effectively negotiate College resources that align with their goal(s)</p>	<p>Students prefer to utilize printed materials in their preparation for placement exams</p>	<p>Each campus began providing printed materials to better support incoming students in preparing for placement exams, and increased communication to high school partners to increase student awareness of the tests and available materials (DR V Testing and Advising 2015-16 annual assessment report).</p>

		<p><b>Reassessment:</b> Based on the student reported behavior within the Accuplacer test, 52% of students reported studying for the exam—an increase of 26.7% from the prior year. The action plan continues to monitor reported study habits, as the impact of testing will be further implicated in the newly created Excelsior scholarships. (DR Testing and Advising Report 2016-2017)</p>
<p><b>Library Outcome:</b> Promote the College’s effective access to the library’s print, electronic and media resources.</p>	<p>As a result of student focus groups conducted by librarians on each campus, it was decided that making One Search the default tab on the library’s home page would make searching for resources a more meaningful experience for Suffolk County Community College students. As a result of the focus group analysis, One Search is the default and librarians use it to provide instruction at all of the campuses.</p>	<p>The Library will continue to monitor library usage through the various pathways to content including via One Search and via direct access to individual databases. The Library will also investigate additional statistics packages from EBSCO to gain more granular insight into the usage patterns of electronic resources. (DR-Library Assessment Report 2017)</p>

**5.6 Improving Teaching and Pedagogy**

Professional development for faculty and staff is a high priority at the College. Coordination of professional development activities is overseen by the Office of Academic Affairs, and is coordinated by the Office of Faculty and Professional Advancement (DR V 3d, Copy of OFPA workshops and events 2013-17). Along with multiple Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) workshops and presentations throughout the year, every semester the College sponsors a Professional Development Day that features speakers and provides an opportunity for the faculty



to share information. Classes are not scheduled on Professional Development Day to allow for participation of full-time faculty. Additionally, from fall 2014 to spring 2017, the College has offered numerous offerings through its Professional Development Workshop Series (DR-PD workshop Series lists). Although adjunct faculty participation in the events has increased by 67% over that period, scheduling events that are convenient for all faculty continues to be a challenge.

In spring 2016, Professional Development Day was devoted to discussing the use of assessment data to improve teaching and learning (DR V 2c, 3d, Professional Development Assessment Day program). Other professional development opportunities that support academic assessment have included workshops such as ILO Mapping (11/13/15), SUNY and Middle States Assessment Expectations (11/19/15), and Systematic Assessment of Student Learning Outside the Classroom. All professional development activities include a participant assessment, and the College engages in regular assessment of its professional development efforts. An example of how the participant evaluations inform the planning of subsequent events is reflected in the feedback from both spring 2016 and fall 2016 PD events that indicated a desire for more focus on recognizing faculty accomplishments. In response, at the spring 2017 event the booklet “Celebrating Our Accomplishments” was distributed, which highlighted faculty professional and academic presentations, leadership positions in external higher education organizations, publications, research grants, awards, gallery or artistic performances, and terminal degree obtainment (DR, Celebrating our Accomplishments, PD, 3-7-17).

Additionally, the College provides support for faculty and staff to participate in various assessment activities such as the SUNY online certificate program in Assessment of Learning Outcomes, co-sponsored by the SUNY Center for Professional Development and the SUNY Council on Assessment (DR V 3d, Assessment of Learning Outcomes Course Info). To date, six members of the College faculty and staff have completed this certificate program with an additional several members registered to begin the program in spring 2018. Moreover, faculty members from the Nursing, LAS: Science programs have recently shared their assessment experiences at conferences and workshops with their colleagues.

## 5.7 Indicators of Student Success

Institutional Goals and Measurable Institutional Objectives are utilized by the College to track student success using retention, persistence, and graduation rates. The table below indicates the trends in both retention and persistence rates for first-time, full-time, and part-time students.

Table 5.4 Persistence and Retention Rates by Status and Year

		ATTENDING NEXT SPRING (Persistence)		ATTENDING NEXT FALL (Retention)	
		Headcount	Percent	Headcount	Percent
Fall 2009	Full-Time	3,976	80.9%	3,139	64.0%
	Part-Time	423	60.0%	319	45.2%
	Total	4,399	78.3%	3,458	61.6%
Fall 2010	Full-Time	4,036	81.5%	3,167	64.0%
	Part-Time	448	60.7%	318	43.1%
	Total	4,484	78.8%	3,485	61.3%
Fall 2011	Full-Time	3,789	82.2%	2,922	63.4%
	Part-Time	462	59.3%	346	44.4%
	Total	4,251	78.9%	3,268	60.7%
Fall 2012	Full-Time	3,723	79.7%	2,902	62.1%
	Part-Time	455	60.3%	332	44.0%
	Total	4,178	77.0%	3,234	59.6%
Fall 2013	Full-Time	3,850	82.5%	3,083	66.1%
	Part-Time	461	60.4%	353	46.3%
	Total	4,311	79.4%	3,436	63.3%
Fall 2014	Full-Time	3,935	83.0%	3,164	66.8%
	Part-Time	419	62.6%	316	47.2%
	Total	4,354	80.5%	3,480	64.4%
Fall 2015	Full-Time	3,863	81.8%	3,222	68.3%
	Part-Time	413	64.9%	328	51.6%
	Total	4,276	79.8%	3,550	66.3%
IPEDS First-Time degree seeking					

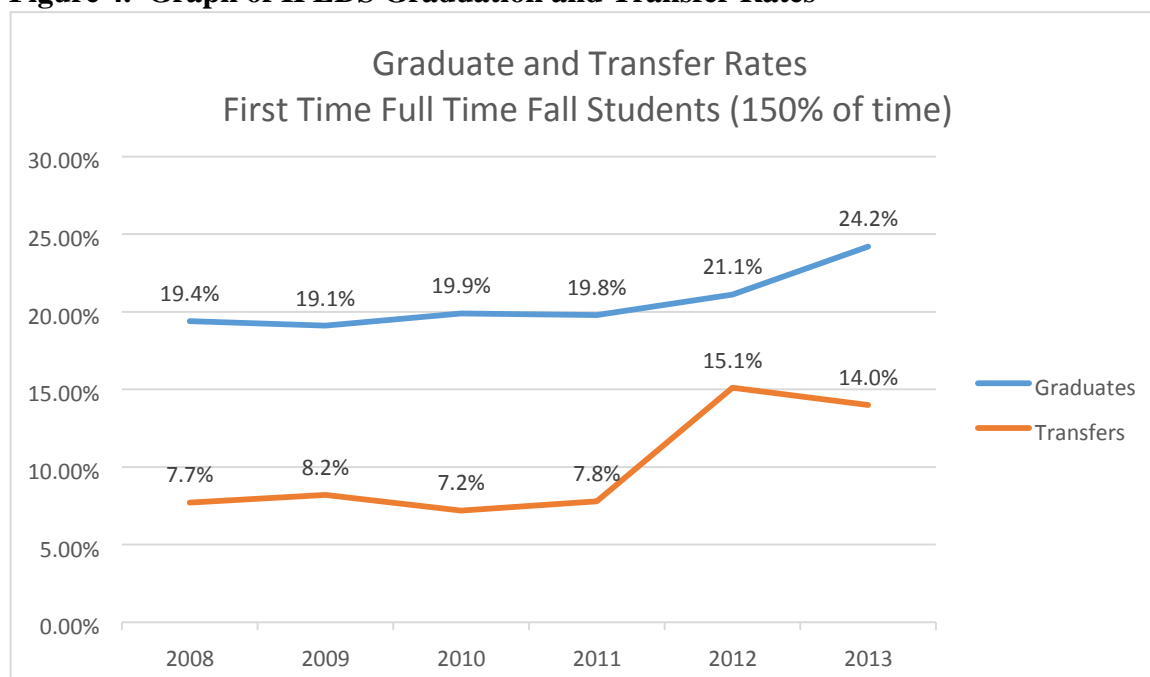
The College has seen modest increases in the rates of retention and persistence of both full-time and part-time students. It continues to set goals to increase both rates as evidenced in the annual Report of Institutional Effectiveness (DR January 2017 report). Additional initiatives to increase these rates are outlined in greater detail in Standard IV.

The College's overall graduation rate increased almost 3% in 2016 over the previous six-year average trend of

19-20%. This is a result of many factors including interventions in developmental placement, working with K-12 partners, the economy, and enhanced advising practices. Table 5.4 illustrates the trend in graduation/transfer rate. The increase in student completion rates is a result of many factors. For example:

- The use of multiple measures for initial placement into developmental studies has led to fewer students placing into developmental coursework. Multiple developmental placements have been shown to impact retention and completion negatively.
- As a result of the Title III grant project, advisement centers were created on each campus and faculty advisement across the College has been more intentional.
- The SUNY 64 mandate required the College to reduce the number of credits in its programs, reducing the time to degree completion.
- An increase in better-prepared students choosing to stay on Long Island for their first two years of post-secondary study to reduce debt. (Appendix O:-2015-2016 Report on Institutional Effectiveness)

**Figure 4. Graph of IPEDS Graduation and Transfer Rates**



The College has also joined the Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA), an initiative of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), which collects data to help community colleges evaluate student success rates using data sets more applicable to community colleges, such as developmental student success rates, transfer rates, and data collected over longer periods of time than IPEDS data.

## 5.8 External Accreditations

The College has 11 external program accreditations (Appendix M:-Externally Accredited Programs). In the fall 2016, External Accreditation Guidelines were developed to help support program related accreditation activities and guide communication processes (DR-External Accreditation Guidelines). For several externally accredited programs, key indicators are the pass rates for our graduates on the licensing examinations. Table 18 provides recent pass rates on several externally accredited programs. In the case of the Nursing programs there was a decline in the first-time licensure pass rates on the NCLEX that resulted in the Nursing faculty developing an early intervention program for “at risk” students that gave faculty members release time to develop, implement, and evaluate individualized learning plans for students deemed to be at risk. In addition, the faculty revised the Assessment Technology Institute (ATI) Nursing Education participation rubric to hold students more accountable for active participation and reflective learning (DR-ACEN Follow-Up Reports 2017/2018). The Veterinary Science Technology and Health Information Technology AAS programs are currently reviewing their curriculums to improve their licensure pass rates.

**Table 5.5 Examples of Externally Accredited Programs, Accreditation Examinations, and 3-Year Pass Rates (DR V 2b Department Websites)**

Program	External Accreditor	Accreditation Examination for Eligible Graduates	3-year Pass Rate
Veterinary Science Technology (AAS)	American Veterinary Medical Association	Veterinary Technician National Examination	73% (2014-2017)
Occupational Therapy Assistant (AAS)	American Occupational Therapy Association	National Board Certification in Occupational Therapy	98% (2014-16)
Nursing (RN) (AS)	Commission for Education in Nursing	National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Professional Nurses	80% (2015-17)
Nursing (PN)	Commission for Education in Nursing	National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses	79% (2014-16)
Physical Therapist Assistant (AAS)	Commission on Accrediting in Physical Therapy Education	National Physical Therapy Examination	95% (2015-17)
Health Information Technology/Medical Records (AAS)	Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management	Registered Health Information Technician Exam	61% (2014-16)

Chemical Dependency Counseling (AAS)	Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services	Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor	84.6% (2017)
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## 5.9 Assessment of Educational Effectiveness

The assessment of assessment processes is a vital component for both implementing necessary changes and to the sustainability of a culture of assessment. In 2011, the College created the Assessment Advisory Council (AAC), which is further detailed in Standard VII. The AAC is a key factor in maintaining transparency and supporting communication throughout the assessment process. The committee is comprised of faculty, administrators, and staff who are charged with overseeing the implementation of the CAPIE, ongoing review of the CAPIE, assessment of all completed assessment reports, and communication of those results to all relevant stakeholders. Subcommittees are tasked with assessing General Education course assessment reports, non-programmatic course assessment reports, program review reports, and AES assessment reports. Each committee uses an established rubric in their assessments. Every subcommittee also has a designated CAPIE Liaison; any suggested revisions to the CAPIE that may come out of subcommittee discussions are communicated by the CAPIE Liaison to a co-chair of the AAC, who is charged with overseeing the annual review of the CAPIE (**ROA 10**).

## Recommendation

As indicated in sections 5.3 and 5.6, professional development of faculty has been ongoing and critical to the development of quality academic assessment at the College. Therefore, in order to share internal expertise, the College should use a web based platform accessible to both full-time and adjunct faculty to share teaching and learning and assessment resources.

## Conclusion

The College meets the criteria specified in Middle States Accreditation Standard V as demonstrated by the academic assessment processes in place at the College, including evidence that assessment practices are ongoing, sustainable, and regularly assessed, and that results of assessment are shared

with relevant stakeholders and utilized to make decisions which ultimately improve the student experience at the College.

## STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

*The institution’s planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.*

### Overview

As previously discussed in Standards I and V, Suffolk County Community College engages in a comprehensive, integrated planning process that incorporates assessment and evaluation to inform resource allocation and decision making for institutional effectiveness. Institutional effectiveness is the extent to which the College meets its Mission and Vision while being efficient and fiscally responsible (CAPIE, 26).

The six Institutional Goals (IGs) clarify the Mission and Vision of the College (CAPIE, 7). The college community, faculty governance, and the Board of Trustees approved sixteen Measurable Institutional Objectives (MIOs) aligned with these goals (Strategic Plan, 6). Since then, the Strategic Planning Council (SPC) has monitored the College’s progress toward the achievement of these measurable objectives and recommended action plans as appropriate. Each objective links to 75 Key Performance Indicators. The KPIs show the success of initiatives implemented to improve the College’s progress toward the MIOs (Appendix N: 2016-2017 Operational Plan).

The College is an institution dedicated to continual assessment and utilizes the CAPIE (detailed in Standard I) to link the elements related to assessment, planning, and budgeting (CAPIE, 26).

## Findings and Discussion

### 6.1 Strategic and Operational Planning

The Strategic Plan sets the direction and guides decision making within the College for a seven-year period. The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE),



in coordination with executives from each administrative unit, coordinates the development of the annual Operational Plan. This plan promotes progress in addressing the goals of the Strategic Plan through development of annual actions and initiatives at the campus and department level designed for IG attainment and prioritizes the allocation of College resources (CAPIE, 26).

In collaboration with the Strategic Planning Council, OPIE has developed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each MIO. These objectives use KPIs to gauge progress. Some examples are

**Table 6.1 Key Performance Indicators**

First-Time/Full-Time Passing Rate in Gateway Courses				
2014-2015 Rate	2015-2016 Rate	change	KPI Target Rate 2020	Status
77.8%	78.1%	+0.3% points	75%	Exceeding

Fall-to-Spring Persistence Rate				
2014-2015	2015-2016	change	KPI Target by 2020	Status
83.0%	81.8%	-1.2% points	75%	Exceeding

Fall-to-Fall Retention Rate				
2014-2015	2015-2016	change	KPI Target by 2020	Status
66.8%	68.3%	+1.5% points	70%	Approaching

150% of time (3 years) FT/FT Graduation Rate				
2014-2015	2015-2016	change	KPI Target by 2020	Status
21%	24%	+3% points	20%	Exceeding

The SPC reviews the relevance of these indicators, observing their efficacy, and recommends modifications as necessary. OPIE establishes benchmarking thresholds and potential target metrics for each KPI in order to track the College’s progress. Each indicator is aligned to a specific action or initiative of the Operational Plan, is communicated College-wide with three annual progress reports, and is assigned to a specific College executive for oversight. OPIE meets with executives



and their teams to provide guidance in this process (DR-Operational Planning Guidelines 2015, 1-3). Regular review and update of organizational charts clarifies the reporting structure of the College and delegates responsibility under each executive (Appendix B: Organizational Chart). Additionally, regular Cabinet meetings are held to evaluate campus and College-wide initiatives.

OPIE produces an annual Report of Institutional Effectiveness at the beginning of each calendar year documenting the College's progress in achieving its MIOs for the previous academic year. The 2015-2016 Operational Plan contained 50 strategic actions and initiatives (DR: 2015-2016 Operational Plan). Ninety-six percent of these actions and initiatives either were completed or were in progress by the end of the 2015-2016 academic year (DR: 2015-2016 Institutional Effectiveness Report, 17).

As outlined in chart 6.1, the SPC reviews operational planning processes, recommends appropriate changes to the process as necessary, and evaluates progress toward IGs. The IGs drive program level student learning outcomes and Administrative and Educational Support (AES) unit outcome assessments at each campus (CAPIE, 26). OPIE supports and facilitates the integrated planning, research, and assessment activities of the College.

In addition to annual Strategic and Operational Plans, planning is done for particular College needs, including the development of a College Strategic Enrollment Plan and a College Student Engagement (Retention) Plan in 2015-2016, as well as a College Diversity Plan in 2017-2018 (Appendix F, G and H). These plans guide the offices charged with these responsibilities in their operations and development of policies and procedures.

## **6.2 Institutional Assessment**

The College's assessment practices are strengthened by the implementation of the CAPIE. Building on existing assessment, this integrates all units of the College into a cycle of continuous assessment and evaluation that drives resource allocation and determines institutional effectiveness. Assessment practices include program and unit reviews, program and unit level assessments, external accreditation reviews, and surveys (**ROA 10**). The CAPIE's goal is to ensure the assessment of College goals, outcomes, and objectives in a continual and systematic manner. It

provides a timeline for assessments as well as guidelines for communication of results to appropriate constituents. It also links assessment to planning and resource allocation, and evaluates the planning and assessment process for its effectiveness and possible improvement (CAPIE, 3-5, 34-40). The Assessment Advisory Council (AAC) meets regularly to review the implementation of the CAPIE's assessment components, including annual AES unit assessments and academic assessments (annual assessment of program student learning outcomes, general education assessments, and non-programmatic course assessments). The AAC, the SPC, or the Joint Planning and Assessment Council, a committee comprised of both councils, make recommendations for changes to the CAPIE. The joint council forwards any recommendations to the President for final approval. Additionally, the AAC reviews the CAPIE comprehensively every five years (CAPIE, 27) **(ROA 8)**.

The AAC reviews the quality and completeness of these academic and AES reviews and other assessments. Their analyses show significant progress from previous years. In 2013-2014, slightly over 50% of both AES Unit outcomes and program learning outcomes assessments met the AAC's criteria of quality and completeness. This increased to over 70% in 2014-2015, and in 2015-2016, the academic program learning outcomes increased to 89% (Appendix O: 2015-2016 Institutional Effectiveness Report, 9).

AES unit assessments include assessment of student learning outcomes and of support outcomes (and comprehensive evaluation are done through unit reviews). Each area follows a specific cycle of assessment coupled with executive responsibility and oversight. Eighty-five to ninety percent of scheduled Academic Program Reviews and AES Unit Reviews have been completed each year since 2013.

There are several examples from a variety of areas that demonstrate positive institutional improvements made through assessment:

- In the spring of 2010, an assessment of Algebra I (MAT007), a developmental mathematics course, revealed a 55% success rate (2010 MAT007 Assessment, 2, 7). One recommendation was to share these results and create a forum for dialogue. In 2013, additional funding for the Math Learning Center at the Ammerman Campus provided

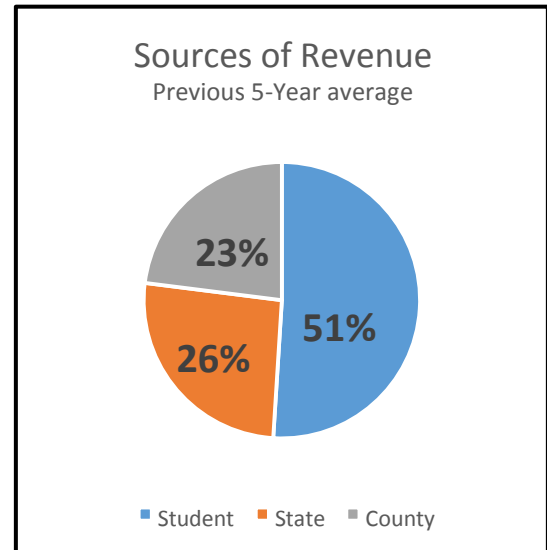
increased one-on-one tutoring for developmental students. This advances the college's IGs in Student Success and Institutional Effectiveness

- In 2014, a team of faculty and administrators began investigation of Quantway, a research based, alternative developmental mathematics course for students not requiring college algebra. The College offered a pilot of the course in the 2015-2016 academic year. 62% percent of students successfully completed the pilot course in the fall of 2015 (2015-2016 Quantway Mathematics Student Evaluation, 3). Mathematical Literacy (MAT 009) became a permanent course offering at the College in the fall of 2016. This example also demonstrates the college's advancing the IGs of Student Success and Institutional Effectiveness.
- In the fall of 2015, Student Affairs implemented an action plan to decrease the number of students losing financial aid by contacting students regarding their compliance with state and federal regulations. The College sent letters to conditional financial aid students suggesting they meet with a counselor to develop an academic plan. In addition, students who indicated the desire to drop or withdraw from a class were directed to speak with a Financial Aid counselor regarding potential eligibility issues. By May 2016, there was a 24% increase in students successfully meeting academic progress requirements. This practice continued for the following year and by May 2017, there was an additional increase of 10%. This advances the College's IGs in the areas of Student Success, Access and Affordability, and Communication (DR: 2015-2016 Operational Plan, 12-13, 2016-2017 Operational Plan, 34).]

### 6.3 Financial Planning

As a community college within the State University of New York system, Suffolk County Community College is funded from three sources: State allocations based on full-time equivalent student enrollment (FTE), the support of the local sponsor – Suffolk County, and through student tuition. By law and regulation, the State of New York should provide 33% (1/3) of non-open-access community college budget needs, with the local sponsor contributing 33% (1/3), and student tuition making up the final 33% (1/3). However, open-access institutions, such as Suffolk County Community College, should receive 40% of their funding from the State and 27.6% from the County sponsor. Over the last five years, the State has contributed an average of 26% of the College’s budgetary needs, and the County 23%, leaving students, through tuition, to make up the remaining 51%.

**Figure 6. Sources of Revenue**



Both New York State and Suffolk County are facing fiscal challenges, which impacts funding levels to the Community Colleges. The majority of State funding is enrollment based. Similar to many SUNY community colleges, the College is experiencing a “leveling off” of enrollment. Coupled with modest increases in the rate per FTE, this has resulted in a leveling off of State funding. In addition, our county sponsor is facing significant budget shortfalls and thus county financial support has not equaled the amount required by the BOT. The Board has raised tuition modestly to provide the revenue necessary to support College operations. Over the last several years the Board of Trustees has authorized the College to use reserves to mitigate the tuition increase. The Board does not approach the use of the reserve casually. The College has worked hard to restrict expenditures in order to retain a balanced budget and build the reserve from \$3.39 million in 2005-2006 to \$23.8 million for the fiscal year ending 8/31/2016. The College will continue to exercise prudent fiscal management in order to replenish the reserve to meet SUNY and Middle States guidelines. The State University of New York maintains guidelines that community colleges should strive to maintain 5 to 15% of their operating budget or more as a fund balance reserve (DR:SUNY

Unrestricted Net Assets). For Suffolk, 10% of the operating budget without grants would translate to a reserve requirement of \$21.7 million and 15% would translate to \$32.6 million.

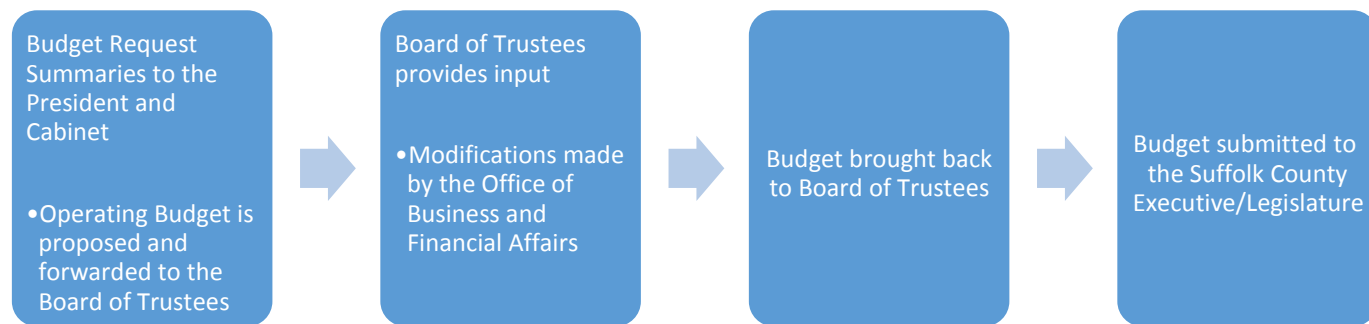
The College's budgetary process for the utilization of operating funds aligns with planning and assessment. The Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs works closely with the President and the Cabinet in assessing and reassessing the budgetary process. Each fall the Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs sends a "budget call letter" to all units and departments establishing the format and guidelines for budget requests (DR: Guidelines for Budget Requests). Executive deans on each campus consult with administration and faculty to determine budgetary needs. Central operating units and campus executive deans meet individually with the Budget and Planning Committee to discuss requests and rationale for their proposed budgets for the upcoming fiscal year. Each unit determines its priorities and submits a budget request before the end of the calendar year using an allocation rubric developed by the Office of Business and Financial Affairs. This rubric measures the alignment of each request to the Strategic Plan, the Operational Plan, and the College's goals. The most recent assessment in the 2016-2017 fiscal year found 88% of funding allocations compliant with the rubric's criteria (DR: Document Roadmap). Because the budget rubric is aligned only to the College's six institutional goals, not all budgetary needs fall into these categories, resulting in the small amount of the 12% of institutional needs outside this framework.

The Office of Business and Financial Affairs presents a variety of budget request scenarios to the President, the Cabinet, and the BOT's Budget and Finance Committee for review. In March, an Operating Budget is proposed and forwarded to the BOT for its consideration. During this period, the BOT considers any changes to student tuition and fees. The BOT provides its input, modifications are made by the Office of Business and Financial Affairs, and the revised budget is submitted to the BOT for a vote in April. After approval by the Board of Trustees, the budget is submitted to the Suffolk County Executive and the Suffolk County Legislature for its approval of the total budget. (CAPIE, 24-25). The County Executive issues the total recommended College budget with the recommended County contribution in late May. The Legislature may either concur with the Executive or change the amount of the County contribution when it approves the College budget in June. The approved budget is then submitted to the State University of New York for

final approval. Similarly, each year the Capital Program is approved by the BOT and forwarded to Suffolk County and then to New York State for final approval.

In the prior four years, the College has reviewed and codified its accounting, budgeting, and procurement policies and procedures. Both the financial audit and the State Annual Report provide evidence of the College’s strong fiscal integrity. Each year an independent firm audits the College’s financial statements to assess its fiscal viability and adherence to standard accounting practices. Moreover, the College has received an unqualified letter for each audit over the past ten years.

**Figure 7. SCCC Budget Process**



In the 2015 fiscal year, the net position of the College improved by \$6.8 million from the prior year (excluding its liability for compensated absences, other Post-Employment Benefit Plan costs and pension liability) (2015 and 2016 Financial Audit Statements). The College is required to submit a State Annual Report, which provides information about operating revenues and expenses. The SUNY Annual Report for the 2016-2017 fiscal year shows a fund balance of \$22.5 million (DR: 2016-2017 State Annual Report) **(ROA 11)**.

Additionally, over the most recent year for which there is complete data, Suffolk County Community College and its associated non-profits were awarded \$4.19 million in 41 annual grants and sub-awards. This figure represents a 7.3% increase over the previous year’s \$3.91 million. The College’s largest awards were

1. The Perkins IV/CTEA-Career & Technical Education Act grant (\$576,355);

2. The Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) awarded by the New York State Education Department (\$449,000);
3. Liberty Partnerships Program grant from the NYS Education Department (\$414,579);
4. U.S. Department of Education TRIO Student Support Services grant (\$281,510);
5. LIGHTES<sup>2</sup> Advanced Technology Education grant from the National Science Foundation (\$281,265);
6. Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) from the State University of New York (\$250,862);
7. Chemical Dependency Counseling Workforce Enhancement grant from the Health Resources Services Agency (248,150);
8. Childcare Operating Grant from SUNY (\$208,938);
9. Childcare Development Block Grant from the Department of Health and Human Services (\$176,951); and
10. (10) Scholarships for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (S-STEM) supported by the National Science Foundation (\$117,569)

These ten awards account for about 72% of grant funds received during the year. Suffolk County Community College received 31 other awards that together totaled \$1.2 million and account for about 28% of grant funds received. The average annual award size was \$93,131 (median \$34,579) with a maximum annual award of \$576,355 and a minimum of just \$500.

#### **6.4 Physical Infrastructure and Facilities**

The College's long-range Master Plan was created to inform and guide academic and student space planning, quantitative space programming, and planning associated with the physical campus and facilities. A capital project update to the Master Plan was recently approved and funding was allocated to ensure future capital projects are aligned with the College's IGs and the Strategic Plan for the next 10-20 years (DR: 2017-2019 Board Capital Program, 59).

College facilities planning and capital improvements have multiple starting points. Each campus has a separate plant operations office that oversees the daily operations of all campus buildings. Campus plant operations directors report to their respective campus executive dean and produce a

budget plan for grounds, building/fleet repairs, and building maintenance. The facilities and design office reports to the general counsel's office and is responsible for managing large College-wide construction projects and long-term planning for renovations and new construction.

The Capital Program is the annually updated plan for the design, construction, and addition of new buildings, as well as the development and renewal of infrastructure in accordance with the Master Plan. Requests for new capital projects are submitted by the campuses via the Capital Project Request Form. This template links proposed capital projects to IGs (DR: Capital Request Form).

The Physical Resources Subcommittee meets once a year to review the Capital Program and formulate project requests for the upcoming year. This subcommittee is comprised of the President, members of the Board of Trustees, the Cabinet, executive deans, and representatives from faculty governance (DR).

In 2009, the Physical Resources Subcommittee identified a need for near-term deferred maintenance projects beyond annual budget capacities. This need was reinforced through participation in the SUNY Community Colleges Capital Facilities Assessment and Reinvestment Study to determine essential maintenance of the College's facilities and infrastructure. The result was the appropriation of \$31 million to cover the costs of deferred maintenance starting in 2011, including extensive mechanical, electrical, and plumbing repairs, as well as hardscape repairs and renovations, repairs, and replacements of buildings. Approximately \$10 million has been invested annually since that time to address the accumulated backlog of maintenance projects. (DR: Board Capital Program, 13-23). Other infrastructure needs, such as the repaving of parking lots, the construction of a traffic circle on the Ammerman Campus to ease traffic flow, and the replacement and repair of sidewalks, stairs, lighting, and other campus structures are ongoing.

Through the efforts of the President, facilities staff, union representatives, and local officials, the College has succeeded in securing funds for new building construction and other infrastructure projects, which requires application to the State for 50% of the funding once 50% has been guaranteed by the County. Within the last five years, the College has added the following new campus buildings:



- The Montaukett Learning Resource Center on the Eastern Campus replaced a small library space that could no longer accommodate needed services and technologies.
- On the Ammerman Campus the state-of-the-art William J. Lindsay Life Sciences Building was constructed to address the growing need for new technology and learning spaces required by the College's science programs.
- A new Learning Resource Center opened on the Michael J. Grant Campus in time for students entering in the fall 2017 semester.
- In addition, several new buildings are scheduled for construction and a number of existing buildings are scheduled for renovation over the next few years:
- A Renewable Energy and STEM Center is in the design phase and will be constructed on the Michael J. Grant Campus.
- A Health and Wellness Center is under construction at the Eastern Campus.
- At the Ammerman Campus, the renovation of Kreiling Hall is underway.
- Several facilities dedicated to plant operations and storage needs are being completed. (Board Capital Program, 1).

In sum, expansion and maintenance of many areas on all three campuses contribute to the pursuit of several of the College's Institutional Goals such as access and affordability. However, there is a need to more closely connect capital long-term planning needs with near-term ongoing operational needs and deferred maintenance. Difficulties in coordination between various facilities and operating units occur because of their differing reporting structure. Additionally no one is responsible for space allocation College-wide.

### **6.5 Environmental Sustainability**

As part of its overall objective of reducing environmental impact across the institution, the Office of Sustainability works closely with Central Facilities, Campus Plant Operations, and the Division of Information Technology in planning, maintenance, and operations. Industry best practices such as the US Green Buildings Council's LEED program and EPA's Energy Star guide all related activities. As a direct result of an active energy management partnership with Cenergistic Inc., since 2014, the College has saved over \$1.2 million in utilities-related costs and reduced associated environmental impacts. The College has obtained grants for the construction of environmental

mitigation projects such as green roofs, rain gardens, and improved efficiency equipment retrofits for implementation at all three campuses.

## **6.6 Human Resources**

The College is committed to investing in its human resources. Three collective bargaining units represent the employees at the College: the Faculty Association of Suffolk County Community College (FA), the Guild of Administrative Officers of Suffolk County Community College (GAO), and the Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees (AME). Each unit has a contract specifying employee working terms and conditions. Exempt employees at the executive level have the same benefits as members of the GAO or AME, depending on the benefit, as adopted by the Board of Trustees (DR: Exempt Employees Salary and Benefit Plan Adoption, 4). The College periodically updates the Exempt Salary Plan to attract and retain the most qualified employees in exempt titles.

To remain fiscally healthy, while continuing to offer quality educational programs and services, the College has been judicious in adding and replacing personnel. For the past three years, the total number of full-time employees (faculty, administrators, and staff) has remained relatively unchanged. In 2013, there were 1,037 full-time employees and in 2017, there were 1,043. Over the same time, white and blue-collar municipal employees have decreased slightly from 413 to 394. Despite the fall enrollment falling by 510 FTE during this time period, the college has been able to maintain the same number of full-time faculty at 472 (DR: Fall 2013 and fall 2017 Official Headcount Report). Administrators have increased from 126 to 146 and exempt employees have increased from 26 to 31. The recent filling of some administrative positions that had remained open for longer than anticipated partially accounts for this increase, as does the appointment of administrators for new programs designed to support veterans, student mental health services, STEM initiatives, and the Sustainability Program. The creation of new administrative positions such as a Vice President for Information Technology and an Executive Director of College Sustainability Programs will help the College to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century needs. The College appointment of a Cabinet-level Chief Diversity Officer in September 2015 was already in place, well ahead of a SUNY mandate for the establishment of this position. From 2013 to 2017, the number of part-time faculty decreased from 1,701 to 1,626 and part-time staff increased from 373 to 376 (DR: 2013-

2017 College Employee Counts). Campus Executive Deans provide data to support recommendations to fill both new and vacant full-time faculty and staff lines.

## **6.7 Technical Infrastructure**

The College recently hired a Vice President of Information Technology, a Cabinet-level position for IT, in order to better align the College with its peer institutions (CIS, 32), and to develop a comprehensive technology plan.

Information Technology Services (ITS), formerly Computer Information Systems (CIS), provides support for software, hardware, programming, and networking/telecommunications resources, as well as for campus Educational Technology Units (ETU) ) (DR: CIS Unit Review, 3, 16). The IT Steering Committee reviews and prioritizes major projects based upon outcomes connected to the Strategic and Operational Plans. Center for Innovative Pedagogy, with the support and guidance of the College-wide Distance Education Committee (DEC), oversees online learning. DEC consists of faculty and administrators College-wide. Both CIP and ITS take part in annual budget meetings to provide evidence for budget requests. Student technology fees provide additional funding for information technology resources.

In 2017, the College contracted with BerryDunn, a consulting firm, to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of IT operations and technology services across the College, including both academic and administrative areas. Based on the report findings, a number of initiatives and organizational changes have been implemented that enable the College to more effectively integrate IT resources and ensure technology plans align with the College's mission and goals. The main initiatives include

- Better leverage of IT resources across the College.
- Mitigation of the institution's information security risks.
- Enhanced coordination of IT planning, inclusive of re-branding.

Organizational changes to address the function of IT across the College include the creation of an Office of Information Security and the creation of an IT Project Management Office. The latter office is responsible for coordinating and managing all large IT projects from initiation to planning, deployment, and closure, and is responsible for developing project intake and prioritization

methodologies. Additional offices created include the Infrastructure Office (network and telecommunications) and IT Operations (Help Desk, Training, LMS, IT Policy).

As part of IT planning several initiatives have been developed:

- Upgrades to the current Enterprise Resources Planning system, Banner 9.
- Infrastructure upgrades including providing outdoor wireless and piloting desktop virtualization to improve faculty, staff, and student access to technology resources.
- Deployment of over 1,100 new computer units as part of the computer replacement cycle.
- Creation of a central ticketing system for the IT Help Desk support with a system to track the status and resolution of each request.
- Develop of training programs for faculty and staff on Office 365 and other applicable software and hardware implementations.
- Planning implementation of Office 365 College-wide.

## **6.8 Reporting**

The College uses internal and external reporting in addition to the Joint planning processes (SPC and AAC) as described above as part of the overall strategy to measure and assess institutional resources needed to support the mission and Institutional Goals. The College demonstrates a commitment to data-driven assessment and decision-making through several avenues. The Voluntary Framework for Accountability, an initiative of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), provides accessible data, but specifically considers the mission and demographics of community colleges, including reporting of longitudinal and part-time student success metrics. In 2016, the College began participating in Achieving the Dream, a data-driven, national reform movement to enhance student learning and success (Appendix G, 18). The College reports to the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), the Student Achievement Measures (SAM) database, and The National Clearinghouse, which tracks students moving through higher education nationally. In addition to the many statistical reports required of the College as part of the SUNY system (known as SIRIS reports), the College submitted the SUNY Excels 2015 Performance Improvement Plan, a narrative providing priorities for the achievement of a series of metrics designed to foster continual improvement (DR: SUNY Excels). The College submits its budgets, audits, and a comprehensive financial report to SUNY as required by all community colleges within the system. Periodic reports, such as Community College Survey of

Student Engagement (CCSSE), the SUNY Student Opinion survey, the College Factbook, and statistical and enrollment reports are posted on the OPIE webpages for use by the college community. These reports ensure the College is attentive to its institutional effectiveness, and conforms to generally accepted accounting principles.

## **Recommendation(s)**

There is no recommendation for this standard.

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the criteria specified in Middle States Accreditation Standard VI as evidenced above. The financial position of the College is strong and stable. The budgetary processes of the College have been streamlined, integrated, and linked to the Institutional Goals. Rubrics and forms designed through a collaborative effort have simplified the process and ensured the use of assessment in each request. The Strategic Plan connects the Operating Budget to assessment activities. The Master Plan connects the Capital Program to Institutional Goals. In this way, College-wide assessment informs both budgets. The Strategic Plan, Operational Plan, the CAPIE, and the Master Plan are a result of College-wide collaboration and formal assessment. They demonstrate the College's progress toward its Institutional Goals. A diverse population from the College community engages in the development, formalization, maintenance, and implementation of these plans. These documents are available to the public on the College website. Changes and updates to institutional plans are communicated through College Briefs and town hall meetings. The contents of these documents reflect the priorities of the institution. Established through institutional introspection, they serve to advance the Mission and Vision of Suffolk County Community College.

## **STANDARD VII: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADMINISTRATION**

*The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.*

### **Overview**

Suffolk County Community College is a large, complex institution that has developed an effective administrative structure, overseen by an active, independent Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees has oversight of the President, policies and procedures, and has the fiduciary responsibility to ensure the College is working to carry out its mission. The College is served by an effective Chief Executive Officer, its President, and under the supervision of that President an accomplished, skilled, and credentialed administrative staff charged with managing day-to-day activities of the College. The governance, administration, and administrative units are regularly assessed for effectiveness to promote continual improvement.

### **Findings and Discussion**

#### **7.1 Governance Structure**

Understanding the higher education structure in New York State and the College's relationship to the State University of New York (SUNY) and its local sponsor, Suffolk County, is critical in evaluating the Governance, Leadership, and Administrative structures and work at the College.

All public and private colleges and universities in New York State are part of the University of the State of New York, an entity created in 1784 and established in the New York State Constitution that embraces all education in New York State, from prekindergarten through postdoctoral. The University of the State of New York is governed by the Board of Regents. The Regents are responsible for the general supervision of all educational activities within New York State and preside over the New York State Education Department (SED). SED is the state governmental agency in New York charged with the general management and supervision of educational work within the State. The Regents set overall educational policy for the State of New York and appoint

a Commissioner of Education as SED's chief administrative officer to carry out the State's educational policy. The Board of Regents is charged by statute with developing a Statewide Plan for Higher Education every eight years in accordance with the New York State Education Law, which is informed by the master plans from each sector of higher education in the State. SED also promulgates regulations governing institutions of higher education in New York, subject to the Regents' approval.

There are two public university systems in New York State, one of which is SUNY. SUNY is subject to the oversight of the Board of Regents and SED but has a central governing Board of Trustees and a central administration. SUNY is required by statute every four years to adopt or update a long-range Master Plan, and make recommendations to the Board of Regents and the Governor of the State of New York for the organization, development, coordination, and expansion of SUNY and for the establishment of community colleges in areas in need of and suitable for such institutions. The SUNY Master Plan guides and determines the development of SUNY and its community colleges. SUNY adopts regulations governing the operation of its State-operated campuses and community colleges. While under the general supervision of SUNY, community colleges are established by a local government sponsor pursuant to the Master Plan, standards and regulations prescribed by the SUNY Board of Trustees, and with the approval of the SUNY Board of Trustees.

Community colleges are units of SUNY but operate through their own Board of Trustees. A community college's Board of Trustees must appoint a President for the community college, subject to approval of the SUNY Board of Trustees. The respective roles of the SUNY Board of Trustees, the local sponsor, the community college Board of Trustees, and the President of the community with regard to the governance, support, and administration of the community college are established by statute and regulation. As outlined in more detail in Standard VI, as a community college, the College receives operating and capital financial support from its local sponsor, Suffolk County, and from the New York State Legislature. The College operating and capital budgets must first be approved by the community college Board of Trustees and then by the Suffolk County Executive and the County Legislature (the local sponsor). These approvals take place at separate times of the year. Under the governance of SUNY, all new associate-degree curriculum proposed by a

community college must be approved by SUNY. In general, each individual community college articulates its plans and programs in accordance with the SUNY Master Plan (DR: SUNY Master Plan).

Suffolk County Community College was established in 1959 through the action of its local sponsor, Suffolk County, and with the approval of the SUNY Board of Trustees. As the largest community college in the SUNY system, Suffolk County Community College follows applicable governance regulations, rules, and policies of both SUNY and SED. Initially a single-campus community college, in 1974, Suffolk County Community College expanded to a multi-campus system with key administrative functions carried out by a central office and others by campus offices. This structure facilitates free and open transfer among campuses. It is possible for a student to enroll for part of a given program at one campus and part at another. The structure enables the College to serve the community by offering more varied curricula and at the same time providing higher educational services within commuting distance of all Suffolk County residents. Although there is some duplication of popular curricula, each campus has ample academic autonomy to develop programs that meet the particular needs of its service area.

The College is comprised of three main campuses, the Ammerman Campus in Selden, the Eastern Campus in Riverhead, and the Michael J. Grant Campus in Brentwood. Two downtown centers, one in Riverhead, associated with the Eastern Campus, and one in Sayville, associated with the Ammerman Campus further serve the community. Central administration provides system and policy directives for certain college functions, including admissions, registration, institutional research, financial aid, and business affairs. However, each campus is responsible for delivery of these services.

Each campus is served by an Executive Dean/CEO, who is responsible for day-to-day operations of the campus, campus budgets, facilities, and services. A more detailed description of administrative structures is presented below in the Administration section.



## 7.2 The Board of Trustees

Suffolk County Community College is governed by a Board of Trustees (BOT), as provided for by NYS Education Law § 6306. The 10-member BOT represents a diverse group of leaders with a wide variety of experiences throughout the community. Five trustees are appointed by the Suffolk County Legislature, four are appointed by the Governor of New York State, and one student trustee is elected annually by the student body. The BOT's Bylaws articulate the board's responsibilities in ensuring the institution's Mission as well as the College's purpose of providing programs and services that meet the educational needs of the residents of Suffolk County. These programs lead to associate degrees, both for transfer and vocational/career preparation, certificate programs, developmental education to promote college readiness, courses that promote intellectual development, and community service/continuing education (**ROA 12**).

The Bylaws empower the BOT to appoint a President for the College and to set the College budget, tuition and fees, within legal limits, and adopt personnel and other College policies. As required by the NYS Education Law and SUNY regulations, the BOT delegates to the President or his/her designee responsibility for the administration of a budget for operation of the College. The BOT also oversees all financial matters at the College. The BOT is granted purview of the financial control of the institution through New York State Education Law §6304. Pursuant to the College's By-Laws, there are six committees of the BOT: Student Success, Governance, Facilities and Technology, Personnel, Budget and Finance, and Advocacy. The Budget and Finance Committee of the BOT provides oversight to ensure that appropriate accounting and budgeting policies are established and followed, and that the College issues financial statements and reports in a timely manner in accordance with all regulatory obligations. A separate committee, the Governance Committee, also oversees any ethical issues involving the BOT or the Administration, and provides oversight on policy initiatives and compliance.

The members of the BOT also serve as the Board of Directors (BOD) of the Suffolk Community College Association, Inc. (SCC Association), a non-profit auxiliary services corporation whose primary purpose is to promote extracurricular programs and services that directly benefit the students of Suffolk County Community College. The SCC Association administers athletics, the theatre program, the bookstore, food services, and campus activities for clubs and organizations.

Financial support for these programs and services comes from the Student Activity Fee, which is paid each semester by all students.

Pursuant to the NYS Education Law and SUNY regulations, the College's local sponsor, Suffolk County, approves the operating budget total and the College's capital spending. Due to a successful legal action in 2008, the College BOT achieved significant autonomy over the governance of the institution, nullifying an agreement that ceded such authority to Suffolk County in a manner inconsistent with Education Law § 6304 and SUNY's regulations (8 NYCRR 600 *et seq.*). This independence allows the BOT to uphold its duties without undue influence from the local sponsor or other outside entities.

As detailed in Standard II, the BOT has a specific Code of Professional Ethics (**ROA 13**), identifying various conflicts of interest that could arise for a trustee. Annually, the BOT conducts 10 monthly meetings that are open to the general public and College community. All meetings, agendas, and minutes are posted on the College website. The College President is appointed by, reports to, and is evaluated annually by the BOT. The Office of Academic Affairs, the College General Counsel, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs routinely address the BOT to provide reports and clarifications to the trustees during BOT meetings. The Vice President for Student Affairs provides an update on SCC Association finances to the Board of Directors at each BOD meeting, which takes place during each BOT meeting. The student trustee, central administrators, and other administrators attend meetings of the committees of the BOT, as appropriate or requested by the committee. Reports are delivered at the BOT meetings by the chairs of each of its committees.

The BOT avails itself of opportunities for professional development. Each year, BOT members attend the annual meeting of the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), and can choose to attend state and national conferences. Each November, the BOT has an annual retreat dedicated to professional development and information about current topics affecting board responsibilities.

### **7.3 The College President**

While the BOT has governing authority over the institution at a broad level, the President is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the institution. In accordance with SUNY regulations and the College's Bylaws, the College President is responsible for providing institutional leadership and for promoting the educational effectiveness of the institution in all its aspects and on all levels. The President implements and administers BOT and SUNY policies; makes recommendations to the BOT on curriculum, budgets, employee salaries and benefits, personnel matters, organizational structure, facilities planning and management, and the granting of degrees and certificates; reports on the operation of the College; and performs other duties as outlined in the Education Law, SUNY regulations, and College policy. In addition, the President oversees the negotiations with three labor unions, the Faculty Association of Suffolk County Community College (FA), the Guild of Administrative Officers of Suffolk County Community College (GAO), and the Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees (AME).

The College President approves the recommendations of the Strategic Planning Council (SPC) and College and campus divisions, departments, and units in formulating a plan for the operation of the College. Decisions regarding academic programs, policies, planning procedures, and assessment are made with input from Faculty Governance, SPC, Legal Affairs, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and other College staff. As outlined in more detail in Section 6.3, the President oversees the formulation of the College's budget through a process that involves input from and meetings with the leaders of each department, the executive deans and Cabinet members, which culminates in a recommendation to the BOT. The President meets monthly with the leadership of the three Governance bodies, the leadership of the College's labor organizations and selected Cabinet members to keep these Governance and labor constituencies current on the budget, academic and student programs, and upcoming College events and initiatives.

The President is the face of the College to the community. In addition to representing the College at a myriad of events in the community (see Review of Accomplishments), the President takes the lead in negotiations with State officials, the County Legislature, and the County Executive in budgetary issues. The President represents the College before SUNY regarding areas of policy and compliance, and nationally with many organizations, including the American Association of

Community Colleges. The President also has ultimate responsibility for accreditation with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE).

Dr. Shaun L. McKay, was appointed by the BOT and confirmed by SUNY to serve as the College's 6<sup>th</sup> President. Dr. McKay started his presidency on March 24, 2010 (DR, 2009-2010 CB81). Dr. McKay has undertaken many significant initiatives to positively impact student success, community development and societal improvement, diversity, Veterans' Services, institutional effectiveness, philanthropy, sustainability and technology, access and affordability, branding, identifying and allocating resources, and staffing. All of these areas demonstrate how the College fulfills its Mission.

The President works to achieve goals of the College's Mission through implementation of its Operational Plan, which is developed annually to propose initiatives. The current Operational Plan consists of initiatives or actions designed to promote progress toward the achievement of Institutional Goals, Middle States Standards, Achieving the Dream capacities, and annual Presidential goals, where appropriate. Progress reports and an end-of-year report speak to the progress of each action item. Details demonstrating the use of operational planning to make progress in achieving Mission-derived Institutional Goals are articulated in the Standard VI section of this document and the Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Institutional Effectiveness (CAPIE).

The President has ultimate authority over personnel and broad authority over managing the operating budget. He is explicitly empowered to approve appointments, promotions, terminations, and transfers as per BOT policy. Additionally, the President has significant latitude regarding financial matters and has the authority to approve budget transfers in amounts up to \$50,000.

Each year, the College publishes a Review of Accomplishments (President's Report) documenting in detail the work of the President and the many initiatives undertaken by the College, and serves as a comprehensive compilation of events, programs, activities, and actions that impact the life of the College.

Many of the College's achievements under Dr. McKay's leadership attest to his effectiveness:

- The College's successful remediation of compliance issues with MSCHE.
- The College's response to the SUNY transfer path, 64-credit limit mandate, which required leading the College through the process of comprehensive curriculum review and adjustment.
- The securing of funding and construction of several state-of-the-art buildings on each campus to respond to emerging needs.
- Prudent fiscal policy, which has led to stable College finances and cash reserves.
- Partnerships with local business and industry, private-public partnerships, including a shared building with Long Island University on the Michael J. Grant Campus, and a significant increase in articulation agreements with four-year partners.
- Creating strong relationships with K-12 partners to promote student success, especially with college readiness programs.
- The creation of the Stay on Long Island Initiative, partnering with local colleges and universities, providing to date 198 scholarships, worth over \$5 million to Suffolk graduates.
- The creation of the New York State Presidential Transfer Scholarship program, a program similar to the Stay on Long Island Initiative but newly expanded to all schools in the state.

As a result of Dr. McKay's success, in 2012 the BOT unanimously extended his employment contract through August 2020, stating they "acknowledge their satisfaction with the broad range of accomplishments achieved."

#### **7.4 College Administration**

Consistent with its size and its multi-campus environment, the College has a complex organization structure. The College and campus administrative structures are detailed in the Organizational Chart, which is published and regularly updated on the [College Website](#). Administrators in the seven divisions and the three campuses have clear reporting relationships to the President.

**Table 7.1 SCCC Administrative Divisions**

Academic Affairs	Instruction, Curriculum Development, Workforce and Economic Development, Continuing Education, Professional Development, Sustainability, and Academic Support Programs, and support for campus academic offices.
Business Operations and Financial Affairs	Business and Financial Affairs and Procurement. Business Affairs also helps coordinate campus business office functions.
Legal Services	Legal Affairs, Diversity, Legislative Affairs, Regulations Compliance, Facilities Support, Risk Mitigation, and Human Resources.
Planning and Institutional Effectiveness	Strategic and Operational Planning, Assessment, Institutional Research, Institutional Review Board, and mandated reporting.
Institutional Advancement	Sponsored Programs, External Affairs, the SCC Foundation, marketing, website services, and College Relations and Publications.
Student Affairs	Enrollment Management, Master Scheduling, Mental Health, Financial Aid, Student Engagement, Veterans Affairs, Athletics, Career Services, Public Safety, and Disability Services. Student Affairs also coordinates campus-based student services.
Information Technology Services	Enterprise Applications, Networking and Telecommunications, Information Security, IT Project Management, Desktop Services, and IT Operations.

To address educational and operational needs of three campuses functioning as one college, each campus has an Executive Dean, who serves as the Campus CEO. The Executive Dean heads each campus administration and reports to the President (Appendix B: Organizational Charts). For each campus, Associate Deans report directly to the campus Executive Dean, as do the Administrative Director of Business Affairs/Services, a Campus Head Librarian, and a Director of Plant Operations. Additionally, each campus has Academic Chairs and Assistant Academic Chairs for every department, who report directly to an Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at their campus. The Associate Dean of Student Services also has a number of direct reports, including Directors of Campus Activities, Counseling, and Admissions, among other services to the campus.

Candidates for all of the administrative positions at the College undergo a rigorous hiring process, following the same formal guidelines used for faculty hires, to ensure they are qualified with specific educational credentials and experience (DR). Additional information on hiring practices is located in Standard II.

Administration engages with both faculty and students in a variety of ways. Every semester the President interacts with the College community at each campus through Town Hall meetings (six per year). All faculty, staff, and students are invited to attend Town Hall sessions in order to hear updates from the President and his administration, and to participate in discussion on a variety of topics. Additionally, the President provides an opportunity for student interactions at the President's student leader luncheon which is held immediately after each Town Hall meeting. Furthermore, the administration engages students through the Student Trustee, who is elected by the students of the College's three campuses and reports to each campus's student government, and through Student Government on each campus (see 7.6 below). Administration also engages and is responsive to students on specific initiatives and task forces that are of interest to students, such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the Undocumented Students Task Force, African American student organizations, the student peer mentor program, and the LGBTQ Task Force. Student clubs and organizations host panels and presentations on issues of interest to them that are open to and attended by members of the College community, including faculty and administrators; these often result in feedback to departments, campuses, and administration.

### **7.5 Faculty Governance**

The College has an active Faculty Governance structure whose members interact and collaborate regularly across the campuses, with their counterparts in administration (including the President), and with the student body. The Assembly (Grant Campus) and Congress (Eastern) are bodies of the whole, in which all full-time professional employees of those campuses serve as voting members. The Senate (Ammerman Campus and Central employees) is a representative body, comprised of Senators elected from each department/area based on full-time faculty count (including Academic Chairs, Assistant Academic Chairs and non-teaching faculty such as Librarians and Specialists). Each of the campus governance bodies has an Executive Committee, which directs the business of the body. The campus governance bodies have many campus-based committees which review and

report on key areas such as Curriculum, Academic Affairs, Technology, Pedagogy, and Student Liaison.

In the fall of 2006, an Interim College-wide Governance Body presented a constitution for the new College Governance Council (CGC) in order to facilitate a more systematic and formalized system of shared governance. The College-wide committees on Curriculum, Academic Standards, and General Studies work with their campus-based counterparts and traditionally report to the CGC. In addition to Governance committees, several advisory committees and councils with faculty membership also advise administration in advancing Institutional Goals. (VII.4.e)

Faculty Governance Websites are available to all, and are extensive in communicating all aspects of Governance business. For example, the Constitutions and By-Laws of each group are available; these documents outline the roles of the officers, the membership, voting procedures, and meeting requirements. All the meeting schedules, agendas, meeting minutes, proposals, resolutions, and related documents are posted regularly.

The key role of each campus governance leader is to oversee the campus's Executive Committee and to chair the monthly meeting of the body itself. Any resolutions passed by the bodies are then communicated to the President of the College for consideration. Each campus leader receives one course release in the form of support for this work. Elected Faculty Governance leaders communicate with their constituents in several ways. In addition to the documents posted on the College website, Governance leaders serve as speakers and presenters at a number of College events throughout the academic year and the summer, such as New Employee Orientations, Department chairs meetings, and All-Faculty Development workshops.

Curriculum Development and Academic Standards are the main purviews of College Faculty Governance and the bulk of the faculty's efforts are in this direction. The past several years have seen a great deal of work with regard to these key areas both at the College and throughout the state. The SUNY "Seamless Transfer" mandate made it imperative to review all curricula and meet the 64 credit cap; through the request of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the faculty created Institutional Learning Goals, and the faculty undertook the review and revision of College-wide



Graduation Requirements. Simultaneously, faculty have worked to review many other academic policies key to the support of student success at the College related to grading, advising, and scheduling.

Furthermore, various structures for review and assessment of Faculty Governance have been used in the past. For example, the Grant Assembly has conducted formal self-assessments. The Ways and Means Committee of the Ammerman Senate compiles Annual Committee Reports for all standing and ad-hoc committees. A primary duty of the Ways and Means committee is also to routinely examine the Constitution and By-Laws of the Senate to insure that the Senate is operating accordingly and that the guiding documents reflect the needs of the College. However, shared Faculty Governance has not employed a systematic, universal self-assessment system as other units of the College have. With an understanding of the importance of this process, Faculty Governance leaders have worked with an assessment tool adopted from a 2016 MSCHE annual conference presentation entitled “Assessing shared Governance.” Created in Microsoft 365, this tool will be administered in the beginning of the spring 2018 semester and routinely thereafter. All three governance bodies will now annually conduct self-assessment and use the results to better serve the College community.

For over a decade, Faculty Governance has employed a structure of campus and College-based bodies, overseen by the CGC. In the fall of 2016, campus disagreements regarding the scope and purview of the CGC eventually led to its temporary suspension. The following spring, faculty from all three campuses met in an open forum to plan a way forward, and agreed on the creation of a Governance Task Force charged with reviewing the role and the constitution of the CGC. This task force met throughout the fall 2017 semester with the intention of bringing their results to the College community in the spring of 2018, and eventually reinstating the CGC or a similar body by the fall of 2018. The remaining Faculty Governance structures have functioned without interruption.

## **7.6 Student Government**

Each campus has its own student governance entity (SGA) and the specific roles and responsibilities of each is published on the College website. Specific responsibilities for each member of student government are articulated in the Student Government Constitution for each campus.

The student government leadership's primary interaction with College administration is through the Campus Activities Director on each campus. However, the [elected](#) Student Trustee is required to give an oral report once a semester to each campus's student government as well as a written copy of the report to be made available to each campus's student governance body and student publications. Student government also has the authority to request that the Student Trustee attend a meeting if there is an issue it would like to discuss with the Student Trustee. The Faculty Governance bodies have mechanisms to communicate with student government and encourage student leaders to attend Faculty Governance meetings.

### **7.7 Assessment of Governance and Administration**

An annual self-assessment is conducted by the BOT. Under the established timetable, Board members agree in January to the form of assessment to be used (cite BOT Resolution 2016-46 DR). Members then complete the form in February so that data can be collected, analyzed, and reviewed at the March meeting.

The BOT conducts an evaluation of the President on an annual basis. This evaluation surveys individuals representing three different constituencies – external, internal, and the BOT. A list of proposed respondents is generated by the President and reviewed by the BOT, which can also add names. Specifically, the external respondents include K-12 partners (i.e. Superintendents, high school principals, and counselors), members of the Suffolk County Legislature, and local business and community leaders. The internal respondents include faculty, staff, members of the administration, and students. Each constituent fills out the appropriate respective evaluation instrument. The Presidential evaluation process begins in August, when the President provides to the Board of Trustees proposed goals for the coming academic/fiscal year. In May, at the conclusion of the academic year, members of the Board's Personnel Committee, along with the above-mentioned selected individual representatives, complete an evaluation questionnaire designed to assess the progress of the proposed goals, and the Board then compiles and reviews the evaluations (DR, Presidential Evaluations).

Additionally, the President conducts a self-evaluation, which is submitted to the BOT. The BOT monitors the evaluation process and works with the College's Office of Legal Affairs as the

intermediary between the President and the BOT. All of the evaluations are conducted anonymously and the results are electronically tabulated.

Each College division is led by an exempt administrator, who serves on the President's Cabinet. At the end of each academic year, the effectiveness of these administrators is evaluated. They complete a self-assessment tool, evaluating their achievement of annual goals, and their administrative and management skills (DR-Exempt Evaluation). They also propose goals for the upcoming year. These goals are expected to be measurable and to align with Institutional Goals as well as the President's Goals, as appropriate. The President then meets with each Cabinet member to review the self-evaluation, and offers input on expectations and performance. Twelve Month Guild of Administrative Officers employees at the College are reviewed with an Administrator Performance Appraisal form (DR-B5 form) until the time they receive continuing appointment after five years of full-time service.

As discussed in Standards V and VI, all academic programs and Administrative and Educational Support (AES) Units undergo both annual assessments and a comprehensive review every seven years. The CAPIE outlines the assessment and evaluation processes, and results of administrative assessments and evaluations are available to faculty and staff on the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness webpages.

## **Recommendation(s)**

- Faculty Governance should conduct annual, systematic self-assessments, as other units of the College do, and demonstrate a commitment to self-improvement based upon assessment results.

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the criteria specified in Middle States Accreditation Standard VII as evidenced above. Specifically, the College has a clear and effective governing and administrative structure, including an independent, informed, and active Board of Trustees that fulfills the duties articulated in its Bylaws, including evaluation of the President, fiduciary oversight, and policy-making, among other roles. The President is an accomplished Chief Executive Officer, who is regularly evaluated,

is mission-driven, and leads a team of experienced and qualified administrators to attain the Institutional Goals aligned with the College's Mission, including planning, assessment, and resource allocation.

The administration is qualified, experienced, engaged, regularly evaluated, of appropriate size and expertise, and fulfills the needs of the clearly defined organization structure. It is committed to assessment for continual improvement. Further, a College-wide system of assessment of the effectiveness of governance and administrative units reflects the institution's evolved culture of assessment aimed at continual improvement of organizational effectiveness.

## **Self-Study Conclusion**

The College community recognized and embraced the principle that this decennial evaluation was intended to strengthen and sustain the College as a highly effective institution of higher education. With an understanding of the importance of this Self-Study, there was major and enthusiastic participation from the entire community. Through this process, the College proved that is worthy of the confidence and investment of not only the State and the County, but more importantly, of the students it serves. The comprehensive design of the Self-Study helped highlight many outstanding achievements of the College, from the individual level through College -wide initiatives. One of the most significant findings was the culture of assessment that has formed at the College over the past decade. With a robust system of integrated planning dependent upon assessment, all aspects of the College follow a system of continuous improvement. Additionally, the Self-Study came at an opportune time for the College, as the findings of the Self-Study will serve to inform the next Strategic Plan in fall 2018.

The preceding chapters of the Self-Study have presented evidence and analysis that addressed the College's intended outcomes of the 2017-2018 Self-Study. The results include

1. Demonstrating that the College does meet or exceed expectations of compliance with MSCHE's seven standards for accreditation and requirements of affiliation.
2. Documenting the College's significant progress in achieving our six Institutional Goals in relation to the overall Strategic Plan.
3. Providing evidence of the College's advancement in enhancing and maintaining a culture of ongoing assessment of student achievement and institutional and educational effectiveness, student support programs, planning and effective resource allocation, and the use of assessments in decision making.

## **Recommendation(s)**

Based on the Self-Study findings, the College has identified the following recommendations. These will be incorporated as part of the ongoing strategic planning and institutional effectiveness processes.

**Recommendation 1:**

The College should review the Academic Integrity Policy, its implementation, and how it is monitored.

**Recommendation 2:**

The College should create a single comprehensive and accessible statement of rights and responsibilities regarding intellectual property of faculty and students.

**Recommendation 3:**

The College should collaborate with governance and the Faculty Association to implement a college-wide course evaluation system which will provide students' feedback regarding their educational experience and to incorporate that feedback into the design and delivery of its courses.

**Recommendation 4:**

The College should find ways to improve the online student support services to improve the online educational experiences and increase student success rates to approach face to face instruction success rates.

**Recommendation 5:**

The College should continue to refine processes to support student retention and based on our AtD information focus on African American and part-time students.

**Recommendation 6:**

The College should enhance the onboarding processes to educate students about communication technology while increasingly leveraging technology to communicate with prospective, new and current students.

**Recommendation 7:**

The College should use a web based platform accessible to both full-time and adjunct faculty to share teaching and learning and assessment resources.

**Recommendation 8:**

Faculty Governance should conduct annual, systematic self-assessments, as other units of the College do, and demonstrate a commitment to self-improvement based upon assessment results.

In addition to providing an opportunity for self-appraisal and to celebrate the many achievements of the College, this process also facilitated the creation of a “living document” that would inform and guide strategic and other planning activities after the Middle States evaluation team concludes its visit. The College believes that it has achieved its objectives for the Self-Study and will continue to improve as it strives to provide the best educational experience for every student.