1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

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

Argument

Central Ohio Technical College's (COTC) mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides all college operations. The 2013 employee satisfaction surveys indicated that 91 percent of faculty and staff believe that the mission, purpose and values of the college are well understood by most employees, and 95 percent believe that most employees are generally supportive of the mission, purpose and values of the institution.

The college's mission statement was developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and was adopted by the governing board. The COTC Board of Trustees, the governing board for the institution, approved the COTC mission statement at their November 2013 meeting. The board initially adopted the mission statement in 1995 and reconfirmed it in 2007. In February and March 2013, the trustees held board retreats to discuss the mission and vision of the college, and to set the foundation for the development of the college’s next five-year strategic plan that was launched in 2014. During the retreats, the board members discussed at length the mission of the college, reconfirmed their commitment to technical education and confirmed the mission statement as currently written.

COTC was founded in 1971 as a “technical college” and has a long history of fulfilling its mission to meet the technical education and training needs of students and employers in the area. In Ohio, technical colleges were established around the state when evidence of an unfulfilled need for technical education was identified and where other facilities were available for general education. Technical college programs are defined to qualify students, after successful completion of such a program, normally two years in duration, to pursue careers in which they provide immediate technical assistance to professionals or managerial persons in technical or professional fields. This typically includes engineering and physical, medical or other sciences. The Board of Trustees believes that technical education is even more relevant today and COTC continues to be highly aligned with local employer needs and economic development goals.

Over the years, many Ohio technical colleges have revised their missions and/or have dropped the word “technical” from their names. However, COTC remains steadfast to its commitment to
technical education, retained its name and has expanded its technical programs. The college’s current strategic plan, *Focusing on our Purpose, 2014 – 2018*, includes four primary guiding principles which are intended to support and guide the decision making of every employee, helping the institution accomplish its mission and attain its vision in an appropriate manner. The first of the four guiding principles is to emphasize the college's commitment to technical education. As a technical college located on a campus with The Ohio State University at Newark, COTC’s purpose was and continues to be to provide students with technical skills and professional training designed to meet the immediate and emerging employment needs of new and existing businesses. The integration of academics and applied career preparation to enhance student learning is essential in meeting the workforce demands and economic development needs of the people, businesses and communities served by the college.

**COTC’s academic programs, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.** The mission of COTC has been the driving force behind the institution since its inception in 1971. The foundational commitment to serving the local workforce continues to be what fuels growth and propels the institution toward the future. The current strategic plan recommits the institution to its mission with a renewed sense of importance for the work of the college in today’s technology-driven job market.

The spirit of COTC’s mission is woven throughout the institution, especially in academic programming. Every COTC program is required to have a statement of purpose and defined learning outcomes that are in direct alignment with the college's mission statement. Each course offered within each academic program must have a standardized course syllabus containing course competencies and student learning outcomes that align with the academic program statement of purpose and learning outcomes. Every COTC program advisory committee meets a minimum of twice each academic year to review and validate program curricula offerings and ensure alignment with employer needs.

Understanding the college's mission is further demonstrated through faculty and academic administrative development of online learning offerings and academic policies intended to allow students easy access to receive college credit for non-traditional learning, such as [Credit for Prior Learning](#), [Military Credit](#), and other [Alternative Credit Options](#). Embedding practicum, field experiences, internships, clinical experiences and directed practices into each academic program further demonstrate the understanding of the mission by faculty and academic administration and its influence in designing the COTC student experience.

COTC faculty and academic administration actively seek [articulation agreements](#) with both post-secondary career centers and [four-year institutions](#), as well as contractual agreements with area businesses and industries. The [Electrical Trades](#) agreement with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local Union 1105 and the [Fire Science](#) agreement with the Ohio Fire Academy are two excellent examples of the college's contractual agreements with area businesses and industries.

Physical evidence of the institution’s commitment to its mission is the four full-service campuses operating in Newark, Coshocton, Knox and Pataskala, as well as the Workforce Development Innovation Center (WDIC) which was established to offer credit and non-credit training to meet specific workforce needs. The college utilizes a variety of tools to stay connected to current and emerging needs. These include the [Tripp-Umbach Market Research Study](#) commissioned by the Board of Trustees, programmatic advisory committees, extended campus advisory boards and [employer surveys](#). In addition, the college's budgeting process is directly connected to the strategic plan and linked to the mission.
The mission is brought to life in the Gateway, a one-stop destination offering admissions, academic advising, registration and student records, where staff members guide students through their journey and ultimately into the workforce. The Office of Student Life strives to cultivate a campus community where students can achieve success and become responsible citizens. Its purpose is to support the college's mission by providing support services and programs that encourage student learning in and out of the classroom. More information on Student Life services includes tutoring, learning strategies, counseling services, disability services, multicultural affairs, career services, student activities, and the center for academic success is provided in 3.D.

COTC’s student profile validates the mission statement by making technical higher education accessible to students. As shown in the Spring 2014 Student Enrollment Statistics:

- Of the nearly 4000 enrolled students; nearly 60 percent lived in Coshocton, Licking or Knox counties; greater than 20 percent lived in Franklin County, home of Columbus, the state capital, which borders the Pataskala Campus; and 38 of Ohio’s 88 counties were represented.
- The ethnic/racial diversity of COTC’s student body has increased from 10 percent in 2009 to over 17 percent in 2014.
- With 27 as the average age of COTC students, many students worked and had family and community obligations while enrolled in a college degree or certificate program to improve, advance or change careers.
- Nearly 25 percent of students attended full-time and just over 75 percent attended part-time taking an average of approximately 8.5 semester credit hours.

Along with four full-service campuses, over 1600 students were enrolled in at least one on-line course. COTC provides high school students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school through its High School Options programs. During the 2013-14 academic year, over 1500 high school students were engaged in higher education courses by enrolling in at least one college course on one of the four campuses, an on-line course, or a college course taken at their high school. Since the first graduating class in 1973, COTC has contributed to the area workforce with over 11,000 graduates earning certificates, double majors, associate degrees or double degrees.

The college’s planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. According to the recent employee satisfaction survey, over 90 percent of college faculty and staff agree that the goals and objectives of the institution are consistent with its mission and values, and 83 percent feel that the institution makes sufficient budgetary resources available to achieve important objectives.

The college's budget process requires direct linkages to the strategic plan, ensuring that COTC's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the institution's mission. In 2005, Planning Initiative Codes were implemented as part of the budgeting process. The codes relate to strategic priorities and objectives. Each budget request must be directly linked to one or more of the codes and must include evidence to substantiate its relationship to the identified priorities and objectives. The budget process clearly states that financial resources will not be allocated to any requests that do not align with the mission. For more information, please see Criterion 5.C.1.

Sources

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution’s emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

The college employs a broad range of methods and tools to communicate its mission clearly to the public. This includes current and prospective students, faculty, staff, and the general community in all geographic areas served by the college.

Internally, the mission statement is referred to during meetings and is listed on meeting minutes and agendas, as well as within annual operating budget books, and within academic policies and procedures. More specific examples include the agendas for Strategic Planning Council meetings and documents provided to the COTC Board of Trustees prior to meetings.

There are also multiple external publications, both digital and print, in which the mission statement is regularly included. Some of these are items that are accessible to the general public on an ongoing basis, such as the COTC website. Others are updated and reprinted annually, but distributed throughout the year at events such as county fairs, high school recruitment events, Counselor Awareness Day held on campus, community activities and presentations made to service organizations such as Rotary Clubs. An example of this is the college’s Viewbook, which outlines the institution’s programs and services, as well as the mission and vision statements.

In order to communicate broadly, there are a number of print publications used to inform current and prospective students and their families in which the college’s mission is stated. These include academic Program Overviews that are printed and posted on the website, PowerPoint slideshows aired at commencements, and marketing materials for the Workforce Development Innovation Center (WDIC), such as the WDIC brochure and folder.

It is important that the general public is also aware of COTC’s mission. College representatives are involved in their communities through professional and service organizations. These individuals share the spirit of the college's mission through their participation in relevant activities and in the manner in which they represent COTC. The mission statement is clearly articulated in all news releases distributed to the public through the media, and is printed on the back of many of COTC employees' business cards.

The mission is stated in strategic planning documents and in the plan itself, as well as in the Newark Campus Framework Plan and Profiles newsletter, which is distributed twice per year to area residents. The mission is also included within the printed programs for academic program recognition
ceremonies, for example, the Nursing Pinning Ceremony and the Basic Police Academy Recognition ceremony. Additionally, the mission is included in employment postings that are developed by the Office of Human Resources.

The planning documents are current and explain the extent of the college's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission. The college's mission documents are current; the college launched its new five-year strategic plan in January 2014. The planning documents clearly explain the college's commitment to technical education and highlight its priorities of providing job-focused, career-driven academic programming and strengthening community connections.

The college's planning documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the programs and services it provides. Since its founding in 1971, COTC’s purpose was and continues to be providing students with technical skills and professional training designed to meet the immediate and emerging employment needs of new and existing businesses. The integration of academics and applied career preparation to enhance student learning is essential in meeting the workforce demands and economic development needs of the people, businesses, and communities with a primary focus in Coshocton, Knox and Licking counties. COTC continues to be well aligned with local employer needs and economic development goals. The college’s strategic planning documents set a clear direction for the college and embrace the college’s history as a student-centered institution focused on developing student potential.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

Argument

COTC addresses its role in a multicultural society.

As evidenced in both the institutional values of Collaboration & Collegiality and Sustainability and the strategic priorities to Enhance Student Success and Strengthen Community Connections, COTC understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society. These values and guiding principles are manifested in a college community that strives to be inclusive and respectful of others, and to embrace and celebrate our differences. Evidence of this is found in college-wide initiatives, academic programming, and community life activities that address the diverse nature of the campus community, the local community, and the global community.

The college acknowledges and strives to provide educational opportunities for its diverse population which includes students from high school through senior citizens, many nationalities, and diverse beliefs and practices. In 1971, the community was primarily rural and homogeneous; the student population mirrored these characteristics. In the past decade, the student population has become more racially and ethnically diverse than the three-county area the college serves, due to the large international population in Franklin County. This is evidenced by the 30+ national flags that fly prominently on stage during each commencement ceremony, representing the diversity of COTC’s student population.

Nondiscrimination notices and practices are evident in all areas from human resources and hiring, to classrooms and campus life. For example, COTC’s policy on Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination provides a strong statement regarding the importance and inherent value of diversity. The policy applies to all COTC faculty, staff, student employees and applicants. COTC’s nondiscriminatory commitment is documented in the Student Handbook. It defines the college’s expectation that students function with integrity and honor, and respect the rich differences present in the student body and community. Additionally, the college maintains the Office for Disability Services, which works closely with veteran and military students and families, and is a 20+ year recipient of the federal Carl D. Perkins grant. This grant includes a major component dedicated to diversity of special populations of students, including single parents, displaced homemakers, limited English proficiency students, students with economic barriers, students with disabilities, and students in nontraditional occupational programs.

In addition to internal practices, the college values community outreach and education. As an example, COTC and Ohio State Newark took a leadership role in developing an annual conference for the local community entitled Community Intercultural Relations Conference (CIRC). Participation in this conference continues to expand as other local businesses recognize the need to broaden understanding throughout the community at large. Additionally, the two institutions designed a program, Diversity through Artistry, and partnered with a local elementary school to offer youth the
opportunity to express the meaning of diversity through art. This eight-week module culminates with a recognition celebration and artwork display at the COTC-Ohio State Newark campus. The campus periodically hosts lectures and opportunities for community engagement as evidenced by the annual cultural mixer and the recent lecture by Imam Daayiee Abdullah. Another example is the campus serving as host for the sixth annual Ohio Diversity Officers Collaboration (ODOC) conference in July 2014. The conference provides an opportunity for students, staff, and faculty at higher education institutions to gain valuable insight about pressing diversity issues in Ohio’s institutions.

**Processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity.**

The college provides diverse enrichment opportunities for all students, faculty and staff through programming, hiring practices, resources, and campus and community engagement. Given the strong partnership between the two institutions, COTC works in collaboration with Ohio State Newark on many of its diversity initiatives.

COTC develops awareness of diversity issues and maintains a safe space environment by providing educational and training opportunities for students, faculty, and staff. Opportunities are available to students through classes, student activities, student clubs and organizations, leadership opportunities and other trainings. Specific examples include classes such as Cultural Diversity, Introduction to Sociology, Introduction to Psychology, Social Welfare and Policy, Social Psychology, and others. Student clubs and other opportunities include IMANI Scholars, Multi-Cultural Affairs office, Open Doors training, scholarships for diverse populations, Student Government, and the Student Leadership retreat. A unique program available to COTC students is the college’s Cultural Immersion Experience Study Abroad Program. Every other year, the college takes a group of 15-20 students to Reggello and Florence, Italy to experience Italian language, art, classical studies, history, literature, philosophy, music, food, and architecture. Due to the generous donations of college benefactors, there is no charge for this program for selected participants. In the off years, the college hosts a group of Italian students that travel to COTC to experience mid-western/North American culture.

For employees, the Office of Human Resources offers professional development programming designed to raise primary consciousness of diversity issues focusing on such concerns as dealing with mental health, emphasis on opportunities for women and minorities, and overcoming implicit bias. For example, in 2010 and again in 2011, the college offered the Women’s Leadership Development Mentoring Program to promote the advancement of women into leadership positions and support their professional development by connecting them with others who could provide advice on a variety of work-related issues, including career planning, job skill enhancement, and college/university involvement. Women holding faculty or staff appointments at COTC or Ohio State Newark were invited to apply to be protégés and were paired with professionals who had experience to share and advice to give. The program offered female faculty and staff members the opportunity to cultivate their leadership potential by providing a meaningful exchange of professional and organizational ideas and insights with other college/university employees. Another example is the annual diversity workshop series jointly sponsored by the Diversity Committee and the Offices of Student Life and Human Resources. These workshops encompass such topics as transgender transition, multiracial identity, and assimilating and understanding the large population of Somali students. Several of the diversity programs offer certificates of attendance.

Additional diversity-related opportunities include the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council and the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI). The advisory council was reconfigured in FY15 to place a larger emphasis on community and global concerns with regard to diversity. Its mission is to work with and advise the COTC president, the Ohio State Newark dean and director and other senior leaders as appropriate concerning the promotion of diversity and the further development of a
welcoming and inclusive campus climate. The LLI provides educational opportunities for mature learners in central Ohio, enabling them to broaden and extend their knowledge, share life experiences, become more attuned to community resources, and interact socially with other lifelong learners.

COTC recognizes outstanding contributions to diversity through several avenues. One example is the Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs’ **Above & Beyond award** that recognizes students, staff and faculty who have dedicated an extraordinary amount of time and commitment to diversity initiatives. The President’s (COTC) and the Dean/Director’s (Ohio State Newark) **Diversity Award** recognizes significant contributions to the enhancement, support and/or furtherance of diversity at the college and Ohio State Newark and in the community.

In addition to programming, the college provides other resources that support diversity. The library is part of The Ohio State University library system and the Ohio LINK consortium that provides access to millions of books and other library materials, more than 100 research databases, millions of electronic journal articles, thousands of e-books, images, video and sounds, as well as thousands of theses and dissertations from Ohio students. The library hosts many receptions and book clubs on diverse topics, and mounts numerous **displays** celebrating **cultural** and **religious** diversity, all of which are open to the public.

The college’s **recruitment and selection processes** are guided by a commitment to diversity through equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. Diverse search committees are recommended for all open positions and are required for faculty and director-level positions. As stated in the college’s **hiring guide**, “Diversity provides different perspectives for the assessment of candidates’ qualifications. In selection processes, individuals tend to select people like themselves so having a range of experience on the search committee provides a balanced assessment.” Finally, **Harassment Policy 2.1.20** is intended to protect the dignity of others and specifically addresses cultural differences among international students and employees.

Print materials which express the importance of diversity recognition are included in human resources material and marketing campaigns.

To assess progress towards meeting the goal of providing an inclusive and respectful college community, the institution elicits formal feedback from students, faculty and staff through a variety of surveys. In 2013, the **Tripp-Umbach Market Research study** asked current and prospective students about a number of attributes of the college. Current students rated COTC 3.57 on diversity of students and faculty (on a scale of 1 to 5; 1 being “very weak” and 5 being “very strong”). Approximately 94 percent of current students and 88.5 percent of prospective students believe the college provides a positive environment for students from all cultural backgrounds. The **2013 Noel Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey** indicated that overall, most respondents believe that the college is doing a good job of addressing certain aspects of diversity among employees. Ninety-three percent stated that they believe the campus creates an environment that is positive for all employees, and 94 percent feel that the college welcomes people from all backgrounds. Ninety-seven percent stated that they are personally treated with respect at the college and 98 percent feel safe and secure at the institution.

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1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution’s educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

COTC's mission documents emphasize that the high-quality education the institution provides its students is intended not only for their individual benefit, but also to equip them to compete regionally and globally.

**COTC’s educational role entails a public obligation.** The Board of Trustees ascribes to the **objective** that technical education should prepare students to assume their roles as intelligent, active, and informed citizens. COTC is fully committed to educating the whole person. The **General Education philosophy** is to provide every student with many opportunities to develop knowledge, technical skills, self-reliance, and a sense of responsibility as a citizen of the community, the nation, and the world. This is accomplished through quality academic courses and experiences in communications, mathematics, lab science, social science, computer literacy, community and cultural awareness, and wellness. Each technology program includes general education courses the college regards as essential for the education of every student. COTC has defined general education as a collection of courses that assist the student in acquiring effective written and spoken communication skills; problem solving and/or critical thinking, mathematical and computation skills; natural and physical laboratory science skills; experiences in the social and behavioral sciences, arts and humanities, ethics, and cultural diversity; and computer and information literacy.

The Student Activities Office provides programming to enhance the cultural, intellectual and social growth of the college community. Cultural programs include visits to museums, concerts, theatres and weekend overnight excursions. Educational programs include lectures, debates, films and open forums on topics of regional, national and international interest. Social programs include leadership workshops, leisure, community service events, one-day trips, sports events and theme-based events.

Additionally, the college is devoted to the development of social awareness through volunteerism and civic engagement. The Student Activities Office promotes collaboration between the campus and community and serves as a connection point for students, faculty, staff and community-based organizations interested in establishing service opportunities, partnerships, and reciprocal learning opportunities. Students have the opportunity to participate in an array of community service activities or academic courses that include service-learning requirements. Some examples include:

- **American Red Cross Blood Drives** - Co-sponsored with the American Red Cross-Central Ohio Region, these events occur each term, and are a staple for the local Red Cross chapter. The college typically meets its established goal. In addition, the college serves as an alternate site...
for the Licking County Red Cross. In case of a cancellation (typically due to weather) at a
scheduled location, they will move the drive to the campus instead of canceling the entire
event. This agreement allows for continuous collection.

- **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance** - Since 2008, the Office of Student Life has hosted the
Licking County Coalition for Housing in providing Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA),
a program sponsored by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which offers free income tax
assistance to eligible low and moderate income taxpayers. VITA sites are staffed and operated
by IRS-certified volunteers who prepare and e-file federal, state and school district Income tax
returns.

- Benefit Walks — These events, sponsored by service agencies and the Office of Student Life,
have occurred for more than seven years. Examples include the American Cancer Society Relay
for Life and Team Greyhound 5K Run/Walk Your Dog to benefit Team Greyhound Adoption
of Ohio. The Office of Student Life, along with several student organizations, helps coordinate
events and members of the college actively participate.

- Campus Commitment — This is an annual pre-autumn semester service event involving
students, faculty and staff. Over the past seven years, it has become a campus tradition.
Approximately 10 local service agencies participate. The event is promoted through New
Student Orientation sessions, so student involvement is high.

- Community Intercultural Relations Conference – This conference facilitated through the Office
of Multi-Cultural Affairs promotes a mission to raise awareness of social and cultural
similarities and differences to build an inclusive community. Participants include a collective
group of business leaders, educators, students and local residents.

- Diversity Through Artistry – This is an annual program in which members from the college
partner with third grade art classes at Legend Elementary in Newark. The elementary students
are involved in education and discussions related to various topics of diversity. With the
guidance of volunteers from the college, the elementary students create an art project reflecting
what they have learned. These projects are later displayed on the college campus, and a
recognition reception is held with all volunteers, elementary students and their families.

- Licking County Families Helping Families Program — Designed to benefit Licking County Job
& Family Services, this event is an anticipated annual occurrence. The college community
sponsors a number of underserved local children and provides winter holiday gifts.
Participation has been consistently strong.

- Licking County Health Department – The Student Activities Office has partnered with
members from the Licking County Health Department to facilitate sexual health education and
free STD testing and promote other healthy education programs and walks within the Newark
community and Licking County.

- Student Organization Drives and Fundraisers— These events respond to the needs of local area
food banks, animal shelters, mental health agencies and other community resource
groups. Student participation has been continually strong.

COTC has engaged in numerous actions intended to promote sustainability. For example, COTC is
one of very few two-year colleges that participates in the Association for the Advancement of
Sustainability in Higher Education's (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating
System (STARS) program. STARS is a voluntary, self-reporting system that provides a framework
for institutions to guide and evaluate their sustainability programming via a comprehensive, 135-
criteria, peer-developed assessment. Also, COTC is a member of the American College & University
Presidents’ Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). Its mission is to address global climate disruption
undertaken by a network of colleges and universities that have made institutional commitments to
eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from specified campus operations, and promote research and
educational efforts of higher education to equip society to re-stabilize the earth’s climate. As a
participant, COTC recognizes the unique responsibility that institutions of higher education have as role models for their communities and in educating the people who will develop the social, economic and technological solutions to reverse global warming and help create a thriving, civil and sustainable society. In January 2014, the college was presented the Environmental Sustainability Award by the Knox County Chamber of Commerce. The award honors the Knox County business or organization that has done most during the past year to introduce sustainable practices into its operations or to promote awareness of sustainable practices and encourage their use. Additionally, the college has recently adopted a strategy to pursue LEED certification for all new building projects. Two examples include the COTC Knox Campus facility, Ariel Hall, which was awarded LEED Gold status in 2012, and the new Facilities Operations Building, which is currently under design and expected to achieve LEED certification upon completion.

The primacy of COTC’s educational responsibilities is evident in its guiding documents and fiscal decision-making. As indicated in the Ohio Revised Code 3357.01 the purpose of technical colleges is to provide for the residents of the technical college district technical programs, normally not exceeding two years duration and not leading to a baccalaureate degree. Since the approval of the college’s initial charter, COTC has embraced its role to provide associate degree technical education to prepare students fully for paraprofessional or technician-level employment and which may contribute to the upward mobility of students who qualify for and desire transfer into a baccalaureate program. The title of the college's current strategic plan, Focusing on our Purpose, and the first guiding principle outlined in the plan, "Commitment to Technical Education", demonstrate that its educational responsibilities are at its core. The college has a conflict of interest policy, an expenditure policy and other policies in place to prevent expenditures that do not primarily support appropriate business purposes.

COTC engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs. COTC is structured and aligned to routinely identify, research, and build ongoing relationships with businesses, academic partners, local governments, non-profit organizations and external partners to meet the educational and workforce development needs in all of the communities it serves. Examples of the college’s connections with external constituencies and communities include the following:

**Academic advisory committees.** By college policy and through the leadership of the chief academic officer and academic program deans, COTC directly engages and links local business leaders to academic programs through the use of academic advisory committees. These program-specific committees, made up of industry professionals and employee representatives from businesses in the service district, meet at least twice annually with academic leadership and faculty to review current course offerings and discuss emerging technologies. This group also reviews academic programming with respect to current and future use in their business. Committee members serve as key specific industry liaisons to the college and assist in identifying new career-specific equipment, training needs and skill sets. They also provide academic programs with updates on changing laws, certifications and industry standards, as well as identifying skills that employers expect from program graduates.

**Large and small employers survey, outreach and study.** COTC invests resources to measure progress and research emerging workforce trends. In 2012, the college engaged the services of Tripp Umbach to conduct a market analysis to identify key issues impacting COTC, including separate analyses for each of the extended campuses. Tripp Umbach interviewed and surveyed students, employers, political leaders, workforce development experts, and high school counselors and administrators. Employers and educators noted the quality of education and facilities as COTC strengths. Employers and workforce development stakeholders stressed the cost-effectiveness of a COTC education. Resources, availability of financial aid, and the good value of COTC were among the college's top
four attributes noted by current COTC students. Workforce development leaders opined the importance of COTC’s relationship with the community by recognizing the college's ability to connect to the needs of regional employers and those seeking employment. Educators valued the ability of COTC students to transfer credits earned at the college to another institution to pursue a four-year degree.

COTC also works directly with businesses to create opportunities for enhanced workforce development training through the college’s Workforce Development Innovation Center (WDIC). Through the WDIC, the college addresses the ever changing workforce needs of employers in the central Ohio area. The WDIC offers training consultation and training solutions for businesses that have specific educational needs for their current workforce. This includes offering customized on-site for credit or non-credit training, technical and soft skills training, and development of stackable certificates that can lead to degree completion. The WDIC reaches into every community served by the college and utilizes all four of the college's campuses. COTC has created long-term training partnerships with Rolls-Royce Energy Systems and F.T. Precision in Knox County, Performance Training Solutions in Pataskala, and Coshocton Jobs & Family Services and Ohio Fabricators in Coshocton County. The WDIC has provided 40-hour Basic Mechanical Assembly, 20-hour Basic Electrical training, Manufacturing Math, Basic Math, Leadership, Microsoft Office, First Responder training and EMS continuing education training to name a few. The WDIC is the chosen provider of a large local employer's Global Corporate Orientation training for all new hires, and is a certified provider of SafeLand training for the oil and gas industry.

COTC also works closely with large and small area employers on student internship programs through the Office of Career Development & Experiential Learning. The college solicits these businesses for participation in the annual COTC Job Fair, and has established a jobs board for local businesses where positions are posted for students and alumni. COTC utilizes Facebook and other social media sites to post job openings for employers. The college continues to use contacts within local businesses for job placement, feedback and other career opportunities for students and graduates.

Industry associations and economic development organizations. As part of the college’s ongoing outreach efforts to support business and industry needs, the leadership of COTC works closely with all Chambers of Commerce in the communities it serves. College representatives meet with Chamber members and leaders several times a year to discuss local and regional economic development initiatives. Several COTC staff members, including members of the Development Office work with local Chambers of Commerce on a wide variety of events throughout the year. In addition, the college hosts meetings for many county, regional and state economic development organizations on its campuses. These organizations include Grow Licking County, the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority, the Licking County Manufacturers Council, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and Columbus Region 2020.

Partnerships with area high schools, C-TEC and other education partners. To ensure the college has a strong pathway to support the ongoing workforce needs of area businesses, COTC partners with public school districts and career centers in the central Ohio region. These partnerships include collaborative design of academic programs that complement and improve pathways to degree programs and certificates and maximize dual enrollment opportunities for high school students. During the 2013-14 academic year, COTC partnered with 23 area high schools to offer college opportunities to 1,500 students.

The most innovative partnership is COTC’s Knox Initiative and includes the Knox County schools districts of Mount Vernon and Centerburg. This cohort of students attends classes full time at the COTC Knox Campus, during their junior and senior year of high school, in pursuit of an Associate of
Arts degree, while at the same time fulfilling the high school graduation requirements. At the end of
their senior year, these students graduate with both a high school diploma and a college degree.

As required by Ohio legislation, COTC participates in the Ohio Post-Secondary Educational Options
program (PSEOP). Those who meet the eligibility requirements for Option B, as defined by COTC
and the legislation, take courses tuition free while enrolled in the program, and they receive dual
credit for college and high school course work. Students who do not meet the PSEOP eligibility
requirements may be eligible for an Option A, but are required to pay full tuition. For such students,
COTC offers a half-tuition option called the Concurrent Enrollment program. College credit is applied
to the students' COTC transcript, and may be concurrently counted for credit at the discretion of the
high school.

The admissions staff works with area high schools interested in offering courses taught by COTC
faculty at the high school location. Such courses are open to eligible high school students and enrolled
COTC students. COTC currently offers this model at Granville High School and Heath High School.

The college is a partner of the Central Region Tech Prep Center. Tech Prep programs are offered to
high school juniors and seniors, and classes are held at COTC, C-TEC and various high schools. Tech
Prep students earn college credits and gain marketable skills in new and emerging technologies and
growing career fields. The Central Region Tech Prep Center consists of 14 Career-Technical Planning
Districts (CTPDs), 5 post-secondary partners, and 1 industry training partner. The Central Region
serves as a liaison between the region’s CTPDs and partner colleges.

COTC has formal articulation agreements with 27 area high schools and career centers. These schools
include C-TEC, Eastland-Fairfield Career Center, Lancaster City Schools, Tolles Career and
Technical Center, Coshocton County Career Center, Delaware Area Career Center, Mid-East Career
Center, Pickaway-Ross Career Center, Mansfield City Schools, Fredericktown High School, Knox
County Career Center, Reynoldsburg High School, South-Western City Schools, Licking Valley High
School, Utica High School, Johnstown High School, Columbus City Schools, Ashland County-West
Holmes Career Center, Pioneer Career Center, West Holmes High School, Bloom-Carroll High
School, Watkins High School, Liberty Union High School, Pickerington High School, Amanda-
Clearcreek High School, Mount Vernon High School and Licking Heights High School. (High school
and career center articulation agreement listing one, listing two, and listing three.)

COTC further links to area schools through its involvement in Summer Teacher Externship Program
(STEP), a program offered by the Licking County Educational Services Center. STEP provides
opportunities during the summer for Licking County teachers to gain first-hand knowledge of
business operations for the purpose of incorporating workplace competencies into the classroom
setting. Each summer COTC hosts a STEP teacher for a one-week immersion experience in the
operations of the college, and sponsors the STEP reception in August recognizing the participants and
program sponsors.

Faculty and Staff Outreach and Service. As part of COTC’s effort to maintain deep relationships
within the communities it serves, faculty and staff are encouraged and supported in their efforts as
volunteers in local non-profit organizations. Leadership, faculty and staff serve in board leadership
positions and as members of area organizations such as Rotary Clubs, Red Cross, historical societies,
and community foundations. These connection points help the college identify community needs and
opportunities for student involvement and service, while reinforcing community awareness of college
programs and services.

For example, the college’s director of financial aid sits on the board for A Call to College, a local
non-profit college access organization, and the financial aid staff participate in various FAFSA filing workshops in the communities it serves each year. Additionally, the college hosts College Goal Sunday every year, and the COTC and Ohio State Newark admissions and financial aid offices co-host an annual event for Ohio Association of Student Financial Aid officers (OASFA) located in the area. Financial aid staff conduct presentations on the financial aid process for junior and senior parents at many service area high schools each year. In conjunction with Ohio State Newark, COTC participates in Explore College for middle school children and A Call to College's Reality Store. Both institutions co-host an annual Counselor Awareness Day every spring for area high school counselors.

Another example of the college engaging with the community through service is service learning. Several academic programs at the college work with local organizations so that student academic work also serves the community. For example, the Culinary Science program hosts several lunches throughout the year that raise funds for local food pantries. The college also hosts a service learning showcase each April, which highlights students' and faculty coursework and engagement in service learning.

Sources

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The mission of COTC—to meet the technical education and training needs of students and employers in the area—has been the driving force behind the institution since its inception in 1971. The Board of Trustees recently reaffirmed its commitment to technical education and to the mission statement, thereby setting the foundation for the development of the college’s next five year strategic plan that was launched in 2014.

The college employs a broad range of methods and tools to communicate its mission clearly to the public using both digital and print. This insures that the mission is communicated to every constituent group in all geographic areas served by the college.

COTC provides a wide variety of educational opportunities for its diverse population, recognizes outstanding contributions to diversity through several avenues, and continually assesses its progress towards meeting the goal of providing an inclusive and respectful college community. Numerous policies involving recruitment, selection and hiring practices are also indicative of the college’s commitment to diversity.

In an effort to demonstrate a commitment to the public good, COTC’s mission clearly articulates that the high-quality education that the institution provides is a benefit to both students and local employers. Additionally, through avenues such as volunteerism and civic engagement, the college maintains devotion to the continued development of social awareness.

Sources

There are no sources.
2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

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

Argument

The COTC Board of Trustees is responsible for the governance and operation of the college. In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3357.09, the college adheres to rules established by the board in compliance with Ohio Revised Code 111.15. As a public official, each trustee, as well as the president, is required to complete a Financial Disclosure Statement annually pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 102.02. These statements are reviewed by the Ohio Ethics Commission for any possible conflict of interest. In addition, each trustee is required to participate in annual Ohio Ethics law and related statutes training as outlined in Ohio Governor’s Executive Order 2011-03K. The board adheres to Ohio Sunshine Laws requiring that all meetings are open and accessible to the public. Proper notice is given prior to such meetings.

The Finance/Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees has oversight of financial matters for the college, including review of the annual budget and end-of-year financial statements. The Business and Finance division oversees the annual budget process, which allows all campus departments to have input into the annual budgetary process. Unit Budget Managers are held accountable to uphold purchasing and accounting policies and procedures to ensure consistent and transparent financial processes. The college strictly enforces its purchasing policies which include bidding requirements and procedures. Standards for vendor engagement are outlined in a Vendor Code of Conduct. The Services Center follows strict copyright restrictions and outlines those restrictions in a user guide for faculty and staff. Additionally, the library and bookstore closely follow copyright regulations within those areas. Due to the unique partnership between COTC and Ohio State Newark, a cost-share agreement is maintained and monitored to assure the equitable sharing of resources.

COTC’s financial statements are audited annually by an independent certified public accounting firm to assure compliance with governmental accounting standards. The college has a history of unqualified opinions. Additionally, the college has an A133 audit completed to comply with Department of Education requirements and various other audits by the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) especially in the area of enrollment and financial aid. Mid-term, unrestricted fund financial reports are reviewed with the Board of Trustees to keep the board informed of annual budget to actual performance between the annual audit processes.

The college maintains a transparent and informed environment as evidenced by marketing communications, monthly executive communications and informational email updates. Various constituency groups, such as Staff Forum and Faculty Council serve as conduits for communications as well.
COTC establishes and implements policies to ensure the rights and responsibilities of internal constituencies are maintained consistently, fairly and ethically. The college strives to offer accessible, formally approved, well-articulated, and understandable policies and procedures in a consistent, official format. All policies and procedures are maintained in the president’s office and published on the college website. The policies are widely disseminated (e.g., emails, portal). Human resources, fiscal, student, faculty and staff policies are posted on the website.

All personnel, including faculty, must adhere to all applicable Human Resources policies. Full-time faculty are also governed by the full-time Faculty Handbook. The policies refer to general policies (i.e. Affirmative Action, EEO & Non-discrimination; Equal Employment for Individuals with Disabilities; Nepotism; Conflict of Interest; Harassment; and Drug-Free Workplace, wage & salary, discipline & grievances, health & safety, leaves, and employment, including background checks for all faculty and staff. Additionally, college employees are covered by the Ohio Ethics Law for public officials and state employees. Each new employee is provided with information about this legislation, and must acknowledge receipt in writing.

Academic program integrity is established through a variety of methods. Regional and national program accreditations are obtained for each academic program, where possible. If national program accreditation is unavailable, the academic program review process requires that each program be reviewed every five years. Additionally, as part of the assessment process, each academic program must complete an annual program assessment to ensure the program’s offerings support the college's mission. Furthermore, integrity is assured as each academic program, and each individual course within the academic program, is reviewed and approved through the college’s curriculum review process. This process includes reviews at the departmental and Office of Academic Affairs levels, as well as review by the Curriculum Committee and the academic compliance officer.

Academic program integrity is further ensured through IPEDS reporting procedures at the national level. In the state of Ohio, academic programs and courses must receive OBR approval before they can be offered. Annually and each semester, course-specific reports must be submitted to OBR. Additionally, on a three-year cycle, COTC completes an OBR audit of academic programs, enrollments, faculty credentials and facilities used for academic programming in accordance with Ohio law. Every semester student evaluations are conducted for each course, offering further assurance of academic integrity from the student viewpoint.

Academic and student data reliability are assured at the basic level through the policy on the Responsible Use of COTC Computing Resources. Each student and staff member must read and sign an agreement statement. In 2008, a core group of Ellucian Colleague users established a Standards for Data Entry document that is reviewed and updated annually by the Colleague Advisory Group. Several of the Colleague modules have a Business Practice Re-engineering (BPR) group established to meet, review, develop and implement Colleague user policies, procedures and practices. An Institutional Data Policy has also been established to insure the integrity and security of sensitive/restricted data within the Ellucian Colleague System.

The college recently established the position of Academic Compliance Officer, as further evidence of its commitment to academic integrity. This position is charged with the responsibility for ensuring compliance with all federal, state, and OBR rules and regulations in the areas of academics and enrollment management.

Academic policies and procedures are spelled out for students and widely distributed in the Student Handbook. For faculty, these policies and procedures are addressed in the Faculty Handbook.
and Faculty Resources page which includes a link to the Class Roster Policy. Changes in academic policies and procedures are emphasized during Academic Advisory Committee meetings and mandatory Faculty Development Days. Student academic integrity is emphasized at student orientation sessions and published in the Student Handbook. In the appropriate orientation sessions, students, faculty and staff receive FERPA and HIPAA training. All students are responsible for reviewing the provided Code of Student Conduct, which was established to foster and protect the core missions of the college in a safe and secure learning environment.

Students are encouraged to meet with their faculty member or an ombudsperson to discuss specific problems with a course. They may also discuss the problem with an academic advisor or the Office of Student Life. If the problem is non-academic in nature, they may consult with a member of the Office of Student Life.

The Campus Access Committee serves as an advisory committee to the COTC president and the Ohio State Newark dean/director. The purpose of the committee is to advocate compliance with federal legislation as related to or including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Sections 504 and 508, through recommendations of policies, plans, and practices regarding the accessibility to all facilities and programs by persons with disabilities. The committee also works to maintain a campus environment of non-discrimination and equal opportunity for every individual, regardless of disability. Membership includes COTC and Ohio State Newark faculty, staff and students.

Sources

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- B&F.COTC Purchasing Policy.2014
- B&F.COTC. Audited FS.FY2013
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- HR.Drug Free Workplace Policy 2.1.25.2013
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- HR.Ohio Ethics Law Acknowledgement Form.2014
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- ITS.Data Entry Standards For Colleague.July 2009
- ITS.Policy_ Responsible Use of Computers.September 2011
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2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

Argument

COTC uses a variety of communication avenues to provide access to its students and to the public with regard to programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control and accreditation relationships. A vast amount of data and information about the college is presented through the institutional website, which is the primary mechanism for communication with students and the general public.

Information on all programs of study, program requirements and learning outcomes can be found in multiple locations: the COTC website, Viewbook, academic program videos, program web pages and Factsheets, individual plans of study, course syllabi, course catalog, new student orientation, program information meetings, marketing publications, public relations efforts and advertising, emails and social media. Externally, program information is also made available during high school visits, college fairs, recruitment events and presentations at community events.

Faculty and staff contact information and faculty credentials are available through the COTC website, faculty directory, program web pages and the COTC portal. An online telephone and email directory provides contact information, including office locations for full-time faculty and staff. Department secretaries maintain contact information and office hours for all full- and part-time faculty members. Faculty contact information is also published in all syllabi and in program advisory committee meeting minutes.

Educational costs are accessible through the COTC website and from detailed student bulling provided by Fees and Deposits. The Net Price Calculator provided by the Office of Financial Aid provides estimated net price information for tuition, fees, books and supplies, room and board and other related expenses to current and prospective students. Additional important information provided by the Office of Financial Aid includes the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy, the effects of dropping all courses or withdrawing, student rights and responsibilities, how aid is adjusted when the student is less than full-time or drops some but not all hours and access to the trademarked SALT financial literacy program.

Academic policies and procedures and the Student Handbook are available on the COTC website. The student Code of Conduct, as well as disciplinary and non-disciplinary policies and procedures are addressed in the Student Handbook. Ombudspersons are clearly identified to the community and students.

Under the terms of the Student Right to Know Act and the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990, COTC maintains and reports statistics on the graduation rates of students by ethnicity, gender and other relevant information. These statistics are available on the COTC website through the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness.

Accreditation relationships are available on the COTC website. In addition, this information can be found on specific academic program web pages, program Factsheets, effectiveness data web.
Sources

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- AA.Academic Program Fact Sheets.2014 (page number 2)
- AA.Approved Semester Syllabus Template.February 2014
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- AA.COTC Accreditations and Memberships Webpage.2014
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- MPR.COTC Snapshot.2014 (page number 2)
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- PRES.COTC College Catalog with Explanation and Links.October 2014
2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

Argument

The Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and the Rules of the Board of Trustees ensure that the Central Ohio Technical College board has the autonomy it needs to make decisions in the best interest of the college and to assure its integrity. The ORC and rules state the board's powers and duties to establish rules and practices by which it must abide. They mandate how the board manages and directs the college's affairs, establishing rules and procedures for such things as the size and composition of the board, the schedule of board meetings, and the duties and roles of the officers of the board.

Board meetings are held monthly, and are conducted in accordance with Ohio Sunshine Laws and Robert's Rules of Order. The meetings are usually conducted over the lunch hour at the Newark campus. Periodically, a board meeting is extended to include a special or executive session to discuss personnel, legal or other matters as appropriate. Planning sessions outside regular or special meetings of the board may be called by the chairperson of the board or the president of the college. The board has established a standing committee for Audit/Finance and Board Development. The chairperson of the board can appoint special committees, as deemed necessary by the board. Additionally, individual board liaisons are appointed for strategic planning, accreditation, and faculty negotiations.

The board’s deliberations reflect institutional priorities. During their meetings, the trustees consider, discuss, and are informed about key matters. Early in 2014, the board conducted two special meetings to discuss the development of the new strategic plan. The retreats included in-depth discussions about the mission and vision of the college and the opportunities and challenges facing the institution. As a result of these retreats, the board recommitted to the mission and expanded the vision statement to include a focus on student success, workforce development and technical education.

The agendas for regular meetings are planned to foster and support board deliberations that reflect the board's priorities to preserve and enhance the institution. The board chair and vice chair meet with the president of the college two weeks prior to each meeting to develop the agenda. To prepare for each meeting, members receive a packet of materials for review prior to the meeting. The packet includes the agenda, minutes from the prior meeting, and resolutions or other materials relevant to the specific agenda items for each board meeting. During meetings, board members consider and act upon the official business of the college, including the awarding of employment contracts to faculty upon the recommendation of the president, setting annual tuition and fees, accepting gifts and donations, adopting the operating and capital budget, and approving candidates for degrees awarded by the
college.

These meetings also typically include presentations by faculty and staff. Consistent with the board’s interest in providing relevant, job-focused academic programming, presentations regarding academic matters are regularly made to the Board of Trustees. Over the past three years, presentations included programmatic accreditations and site visits for Diagnostic Medical Sonography and Nursing; the conversion to a semester calendar; revitalization of the Engineering Technologies programs; the establishment of the Dean’s Executive Council; updates on the college's Nursing program including enrollment, employment of graduates, and progress with NCLEX scores; the Italian Cultural Immersion Program; a financial review of academic affairs; enrollment updates; the need for a new science and technology building, and the proposed Heavy Equipment Operators program.

Institutional effectiveness, including student success is a high priority for the board. In the spring of each year, the board receives and discusses information on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that have been identified by the college. Additionally, the board annually reviews key academic metrics including programmatic and institutional accreditation activities and assessments, and student pass rates on licensure, certification, and registration exams for academic programs for which such exams are available. In June, the board approved the College Completion Plan that outlines numerous strategies currently being undertaken by the Gateway and the Office of Academic Affairs to support students and retain them either until graduation or the attainment of a certificate.

As the legal governing authority, the board assigns high importance on and actively monitors the college's fiscal status, and directs its Audit/Finance committee to deliberate fiscal topics and to make recommendations to the full board. During its meetings held throughout the year, the board deliberates on the fiscal viability of the institution. During the annual meeting devoted to the operating budget, the board makes recommendations on tuition and fees, compensation and the overall budget for the institution. During the year, the board monitors interim financial statements and ultimately year-end fiscal results, including the fiscal watch ratios as required under the ORC. Additional financial topics are considered throughout the year as they apply, such as revisions to the funding formulas, the capital bill and any new developments.

During decision-making deliberations, the board considers interests of internal and external constituencies. Faculty, staff and student representatives may report directly to the Board of Trustees. The college's administration, including the president, may report input from campus constituencies to members of the standing committees and to the full board. The board liaisons for strategic planning, accreditation, and faculty negotiations interact directly with faculty and staff to understand the interests of associated constituents on these important matters. For example, the board member appointed as the liaison for strategic planning serves as a member of the College's Strategic Planning Council (SPC) and participates in the regular meetings of the SPC, representing the board's interests during the meetings and reporting back to the full board the activities and decisions made by the council.

In their role as representatives of COTC, board members interact with key external constituencies such as employers, alumni, donors, politicians, and members of professional organizations. These relationships provide contemporary insight into educational needs, career development, and emerging trends that may help inform or impact board deliberations.

The board preserves its independence. The ORC requires that each member of the board of trustees of a technical college district, before entering upon her/his official duties, take and subscribe to an oath that she/he will honestly, faithfully and impartially perform the duties of his office.
The board's Development Committee is responsible for nominating new board members, presenting a slate of officers each year for consideration by the full board, succession planning, and identifying additional opportunities for engagement of board members.

The board delegates day-to-day operations of the college to the administration and expect faculty to advise on academic matters. The rules established by the board designates the president as the chief executive officer of the college with responsibility for the entire administration of the college. The president is charged with the duty to enforce the bylaws, rules and regulations of the Board of Trustees to execute the mission of the college.

Through the Agreement Between The Central Ohio Technical College and The United Faculty/Central Ohio Technical College, AFT/OFT, the board has granted to the faculty advisory responsibility for fundamental academic matters including, but not limited to, admission and graduation requirements, curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, coordination, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process. The Faculty Council is the primary means through which the faculty makes its recommendations on those academic matters for which it has been granted advisory responsibility.

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2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

Found in the Student Handbook, the Code of Student Conduct was established to foster and protect the core mission of the college, to foster the scholarly and civic development of students in a safe and secure learning environment, and to protect the people, properties, and processes that support the college and its mission. Preservation of academic freedom and the free and open exchange of ideas and opinions for all members of the college are central to the mission.

The Code of Student Conduct states the expected behavior of all students on campus. Enforcement of the Code of Student Conduct resides with the director of student life. A disciplinary and appeals procedure is written into the policy to ensure students are treated ethically and respectfully throughout the process. Detailed policies for student grievances in academic matters are well defined in the Student Handbook.

Academic freedom is a respected and protected value of the institution. Article XI of the Agreement Between the Central Ohio Technical College and the United Faculty/Central Ohio Technical College, AFT/OFT addresses professional rights and academic freedom. Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject and full freedom in research and publication of results. While faculty member are free from institutional censorship or discipline, the agreement also addresses correlative responsibilities attached to the exercise of academic freedom (Article XI.2).

Outside speakers are welcome to speak at COTC. It is congruent with the belief in academic freedom and freedom of speech that all views be allowed.

Sources

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2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

Argument

The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students. As a technical college, COTC’ faculty focus on teaching for student academic success. Publishing and research are not required for contract renewal. However, scholarly activity does take place when faculty choose to provide such work as part of professional development. Some of these activities include presenting at professional conferences, holding subject-specific workshops or exhibiting best practices poster presentations.

Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources. The integrity, security, reliability and ethical use of the information technology resources is critical to the college’s continuing success and mission. The Information and Technology Services (ITS) Department has security processes and tools in place to protect the integrity of the campus network. These processes are enforced through formal written policies, procedures and standards, and allow for the effective oversight and management of support services provided to faculty, staff and students.

The Computer Resources Responsible Use Policy is provided to faculty, staff and students. The policy outlines the acceptable social and ethical responsibilities and limitations associated with the rights of academic freedom and freedom of expression in connection with the use of the college’s computing resources. During new student orientations, an overview of this policy is provided so that students remain informed of appropriate practices when using college computing resources. The policy is also available on the ITS Department website.

Library staff provide support for faculty and students in guiding ethical use of information. Copyright training was provided at the 2013 Faculty Development Day and is available to faculty through appointments with library staff. In addition, library staff provide instructional sessions on citation basics and the ethical use of information in the classroom to all students entering the college. This training is augmented by various flyers and handouts available in the library. A copyright compliance statement is posted at all public copiers in the library. Furthermore, copyright and citation information is posted on the library’s website in various locations and is included in the library Resources Guide, called COTC: Research & More.

The Center for Academic Success (CAS) also provides resources that guide students in the ethical use of information resources. Students in writing labs are provided guidance in the areas of proper citation, copyright, and the ethical use of information pertaining to research papers. Additionally, students may consult or schedule an appointment for a 30-minute session to work with a writing consultant.
College-level communications courses also provide students with guidance in the area of copyright law and providing proper credit for original work. Plagiarism is addressed in the Code of Student Conduct. Additionally, each course syllabus references policies relating to plagiarism, legal and ethical behavior, and privacy and confidentiality.

**COTC has and enforces policies of academic honesty and integrity.** Defined policies and processes regarding expectations for academic honesty and integrity and for reporting and handling academic dishonesty are documented and published in the Code of Student Conduct. Published in the Student Handbook, the code fosters and protects the core values of the college, the scholarly and civic development of the college's students in a safe and secure learning environment, and the people, properties and processes that support the college and its missions. The code prohibits any activity or conduct that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the college, or subvert the educational process. Any student found to have engaged in conduct that is in violation of the code while within the college's jurisdiction is subject to disciplinary action.

The Office of Judicial Services is responsible for acting on behalf of the college in matters of student discipline. Under this disciplinary umbrella, it deals with alleged instances of behavioral misconduct and academic dishonesty in order to determine how best to resolve these allegations consistent with the goals and mission of the college as an educational and intellectual community.

**Sources**

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2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

**Summary**

COTC has a long history of operating with integrity in financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions, and has implemented several safeguards to maintain its ethical and responsible conduct. These safeguards shape the operations of the college and its culture as a whole.

To demonstrate its commitment to transparency to both students and the public, COTC employs a variety of digital, mobile and print communication methods. These methods offer all constituent groups access to information regarding programs, requirements, faculty and staff, educational costs and accreditation relationships.

Through the Ohio Revised Code and the Rules of the Board of Trustees, COTC’s governing body has the autonomy it needs to make decisions in the vest interest of the college and to ensure its integrity. Additionally, the board routinely receives and discusses important metrics and statistics that guide its decision making.

COTC employs several policies and procedures that emphasize the importance of integrity in all pursuits by all faculty, staff and students. The security, reliability and ethical use of campus resources is critical to the college’s continued success, while policies regarding academic honesty and integrity foster and protect the core values of the college.

**Sources**

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

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

Argument

Central Ohio Technical College uses a variety of evaluative methods to ensure that courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded. Course changes and additions are continually evaluated based on best practices and input from faculty, deans and directors, external accrediting bodies, research data and academic program advisory committees. Advisory committees are one of the principal means of ensuring meaningful business and industry participation in program creation and revision. Semi-annual meetings help to document the need for a workforce education program and ensure that the program has both adequate resources and a well-designed curriculum to provide students with the skills, knowledge and behaviors necessary to successfully meet the needs of business and industry. The regular program review process, described in 4.A.1., also serves to sustain the currency and appropriateness of the academic programs of the college.

Faculty contribute to course currency and relevancy by maintaining certifications, attending and presenting at professional conferences and networking with other professionals. On occasion, external consultants have been hired in some areas to assist with program and curriculum revision and development. For example, in 2010, the college engaged a national expert and author of the medical-surgical textbook used at COTC to consult on the Nursing curriculum. The consultant worked closely with faculty to identify content new nursing graduates need to know and guided the faculty in alignment with the NCLEX test plan. Since that time, the Nursing faculty have further revised their curriculum both independently and under the guidance of another consultant who has worked periodically with the program, most recently on accreditation standards. Another example includes the recent work of an accomplished academician in Engineering Technologies with specific experience in the two-year college setting who was contracted for a 3-year project to redesign the curriculum and prepare the college for Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) accreditation, a goal of the program. The consultant's guidance resulted in the hiring of new faculty, an overhaul of campus engineering labs and equipment, and the redesign of curriculum that is relevant and aligned with today’s industry needs.
Curriculum is reviewed annually and changes are made based on assessment findings, accreditation requirements, recommendations from the program advisory committee, review of student outcomes, and community needs. New programs of study, revisions to programs of study, new courses, and course revisions are initiated by individual faculty or a team of faculty in consultation with the academic dean/director. A curriculum proposal is then presented to the academic dean/director for consideration before courses are developed. Upon acceptance of the proposal, the faculty team works to prepare the plan of study and/or course syllabi. Then the faculty team or designee presents the course and/or program packet to the COTC Curriculum Committee for review. The committee reviews and recommends to the vice president for academic affairs new courses or programs added to the curriculum, as well as major changes to existing courses or programs.

Further, many courses have been approved by the Ohio Board of Regents and designated as Ohio Transfer Module, Transfer Assurance Guides and/or Career Technical Credit Transfer. The approval process functions as a statewide faculty course approval committee. Each course in a discipline is reviewed by a group of faculty from the state's universities and community colleges. This review process ensures that course content is at a statewide, appropriate level and is fully transferable to other state institutions. Where appropriate, courses are approved by national and/or state accrediting bodies.

COTC articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate and certificate programs. The college offers undergraduate education at the associate degree level, awarding the Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Applied Business, Associate of Science, Associate of Arts, and Associate of Technical Studies. The college also offers certificate programs. Certificate programs stand independently and many are embedded within associate degrees. As indicated in 4.B.1., intended learning outcomes are articulated for each of the requirements in the college’s General Education program, and for each academic program offered by the college. Learning goals are available publicly on the college’s website and in each Program Overview document.

COTC’s program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and at all locations. In 2012 the college moved from a quarter calendar to a semester system. Prior to the conversion, all courses were reviewed and revised as needed by the college’s Curriculum Committee. The committee reviewed and revised the standardized syllabus template, course topic outline, student learning outcomes, assessment and evaluation, college policy statements and course outlines.

College course offerings, no matter the delivery mode or location, must follow consistent syllabus guidelines as reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and are evaluated by the deans and the Office of Academic Affairs. This consistent process allows for some flexibility, however, student outcomes, topic outlines and evaluation methods remain consistent for each course. All instructors must follow the same process and requirements for all delivery modes and college locations, as monitored by each division dean.

Online courses must meet the same requirements as on-campus classes as communicated and documented in the standardized outline and course syllabus. In 2008, in connection with the college’s comprehensive visit, the HLC approved the college to offer the Business Management Technology degree in an online format, contingent upon the submission of a progress report. In April 2010, the HLC accepted the college’s progress report, noting that the college was successful in establishing a strong infrastructure to support its online students and programs. The college’s success in providing courses in the online format resulted in increased demand for additional online courses. In an effort to respond to this demand and provide increased educational access to adult learners, the college continued to expand the number of courses provided in an online format, particularly in the general education areas. Since these courses are common to many of the technology program areas, the provision of these courses in an online format resulted in 50 percent or more courses in a number of
the college’s programs being available as distance-delivered courses. Therefore, the college submitted a Change Request to the Commission for approval to expand its distance education programs and, in June 2012, received approval from the Commission for the initiation and expansion of distance education up to 100 percent of total degree programs.

COTC is committed to ensuring the integrity and rigor of its courses within its distance education programs. Subsequent to the Commission’s 2012 approval for expanded distance education and before moving forward with new online courses and programs, President Coe commissioned a committee to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the college’s Virtual Campus and offer recommendations for continuous improvement in an effort to ensure a standard of high quality. The comprehensive eLearning Report was presented to the Executive Leadership Team in September 2013, and extensive work is currently underway to review and redevelop all of the college’s existing online courses to ensure eLearning standards are met.

Off-campus courses must demonstrate their fidelity to the same guidelines that govern on-campus courses, and are subject to a high level of continuous review to ensure consistency. The college provides high school students an opportunity to expand curricular options by earning college credit while still in high school. Through a variety of High School Options programs, students can earn college credits for courses taken while in high school. These dual credit courses are offered in a flexible time frame rather than the college’s regular semester blocks; however, student learning outcomes, evaluation method, assessment methods and course content are consistent with on-campus courses. All dual credit courses/syllabi are reviewed by faculty in the discipline and the appropriate academic dean.

Additionally, the college offers a number of courses and programs through contractual or consortial arrangements. For example, the college has agreements with the Ohio Department of Commerce, Ohio Fire Academy (OFA); the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW); Autumn Health Care; and the Career & Technology Education Centers of Licking County (C-Tec) to offer courses and certificates such as State Tested Nursing Aide (STNA), Fire 1 and 2, and Electrical Technology. All off-campus courses are reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee and are held to the same standards as courses and programs offered on campus.

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

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution’s mission.

Argument

COTC’s General Education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

COTC’s general education (GE) program provides a strong foundation for student success in all degree offerings. The college is a proponent of students becoming lifetime learners and also recognizes that education in both the arts and sciences is valuable in meeting the college’s mission. All degree-seeking students receive the same general education foundation, which includes communication, computation, critical thinking, information gathering, scientific inquiry, social behavior and cultural awareness.

The college's General Education requirements satisfy the guidelines published by the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) for two-year programs. For the Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) degrees, OBR recommend at least 30 semester hours of GE courses including 6 semester hours each in Composition, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Arts and Humanities. All GE courses should be Transfer Assurance Guide (TAG)-approved and also part of the Transfer Module. A minimum of 24 semester hours of GE courses are required for the Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.), Associate of Applied Business (AAB), and Associate of Technical Studies (ATS) degrees, with a minimum of 6 semester hours in Composition, 3 hours in each of Oral Communications, Social Sciences, and Humanities; and 4 hours in Mathematics. Fifteen additional semester hours of TAG or Ohio Transfer Module (OTM) approved General Education courses and an additional 3-4 hour college level mathematics or logic course are required for A.A.S. degrees with a transfer option. Certificates of Achievement require a minimum of 40 percent (12 - 16 hours) of coursework to be completed in General Education studies.

To ensure that every student is provided the opportunity to develop a strong core of General Education skills, the college has adopted the following minimum General Education depth and
breadth requirements for technology programs (though individual technologies may have higher General Education requirements):

Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Applied Business, and Associate of Technical Studies degrees:

- Two courses in written communication
- One course in spoken communication
- One college-level mathematics course
- One natural and physical laboratory science course
- One course in social and behavioral sciences
- One course in arts and humanities
- Computer and information literacy

COTC also offers a number of One-Year Certificate Programs, each of which require the following:

- Skills in written and spoken communication
- One college-level mathematics course
- Computer and information literacy

Review, evaluation and assessment of the General Education programs and courses reaffirms that they are appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution. The OBR also regulates and standardizes General Education programs and coursework. The college meets all OBR's requirements in this area.

COTC articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its General Education requirements. The program of General Education is grounded in a philosophy developed by the institution and it imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students while developing skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.

COTC is very cognizant of the importance of a strong General Education core to the success of its students, not only while they are pursuing their technical college courses, but in their “lifelong” aspirations as well. Assisting the college in achieving its mission, the Arts and Sciences Department serves in a support role, empowering students with skills critical to both their academic and personal success.

The college’s General Education philosophy is that every student should have many opportunities to develop knowledge, technical skills, self-reliance and a sense of responsibility as a citizen of the community, the nation and the world. This is accomplished through quality academic courses and experiences in communications, mathematics, lab science, social science, computer literacy, community and cultural awareness, and wellness. The college’s published General Education requirements allow students to acquire the necessary abilities to obtain and keep a job, listen and read with understanding, speak and write clearly, think soundly and employ mathematics quickly and accurately. General Education courses meet OBR requirements by including general core competencies that reflect state standards. Most General Education courses are foundations for more specific technical courses at COTC.

The purposes, content and learning outcomes of the college’s General Education requirements are articulated in the college’s General Education Requirements policy that is publicly available on the college’s website and embedded in Plans of Study, as evidenced by course syllabi and program
Each COTC degree program requires the completion of General Education core requirements providing knowledge in the areas of collecting, analyzing and communicating information, mastering inquiry methods, developing creative work and acquiring skills to adapt to ever-changing environments.

COTC has defined General Education as a collection of courses that assist students in acquiring: (1) effective written and spoken communication skills; (2) problem solving and/or critical thinking; (3) mathematical and computation skills; (4) natural and physical laboratory sciences skills; (5) experiences in the social and behavioral sciences, arts and humanities, ethics, and cultural diversity; and (6) computer and information literacy. Each technology program at COTC includes General Education courses that it regards as essential for every college-educated person. Examples of courses include composition, communications, natural and physical laboratory science courses, mathematics, information literacy, arts and humanities, and behavioral sciences.

All of the college’s technical programs provide knowledge in the above areas at different levels of depth and scope. In COTC Health Sciences programs, simulation labs and clinical rotations are utilized to allow students to discover job skill knowledge in the areas of mathematics, communication, critical thinking, assessment and adaptations to changing environments. Other programs, such as Engineering Technology, Culinary Science Technology, Business Technology, Forensic Science Technology and Information Technology provide similar experiences within the courses required in the Plans of Study.

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. When asked how much their coursework at the college emphasized applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations, the majority (67.4 percent) of COTC student respondents in the 2014 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) indicated this occurred quite a bit or very much. The frequency range for comparison groups was 55.0 percent to 59.8 percent. The mean for COTC was 2.87 and the range of the comparison group means was 2.65 to 2.73. The mean for COTC was higher than the highest mean for the comparison groups and was statistically significantly higher than the aspirational comparison group.

COTC is aware of the importance of students continually applying the General Education skills they learn, not only in the class in which a given skill is learned or perfected but in all aspects of a their education. In short, COTC goes beyond the notion of the well-known concept of “writing across the curriculum” to reinforcing all of its General Education courses across the curriculum. The goal is to avoid the “pigeonholing” of knowledge that occasionally manifests itself by students; students learn, for example, that procuring credible research and disseminating it using correct grammar and punctuation should occur not only in their composition classes but in all their other classes.

As noted earlier, all students intent on earning an Associate of Applied Science degree, an Associate of Applied Business degree or an Associate of Technical Studies degree must take at least two written communication and one spoken communications courses. These and other General Education skills and competencies are emphasized in students’ technical courses as well. Technical faculty and General Education faculty collaborate to ensure that students are effectively applying the skills they learn in their General Education courses to their technical courses. One example is the Introduction to Business faculty member who solicits the help of the Small Group Communication faculty member to judge a team building competition. Another example are faculty presentations and workshops during Professional Development Days which encourage faculty to share ideas across the disciplines.
The education offered by COTC recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.

The college’s institutional value of “sustainability” emphasizes the its commitment to mutual respect and diversity by building relationships that acknowledge the essential dignity of each individual and by valuing all races, genders, cultures, backgrounds, lifestyles and abilities. The college strives to create and sustain an intellectually stimulating environment for collective growth. Organizational structures, such as the Office for Disability Services, the Office for Multi-cultural Affairs, the Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Council, and the Faculty Access Committee illustrate that the commitment to diversity is embedded institutionally.

COTC’s General Education core includes courses that assist students in cultural diversity experiences. The majority of the college’s Plans of Study include SOC 110 - Cultural Diversity as a requirement. Many technologies incorporate human and cultural diversity into their coursework. Courses in the Early Childhood Education program, Human Services program and all Health Science programs incorporate cultural philosophy in program objectives due to the nature of the profession.

As discussed more completely in 1.C., co-curricular activities and diversity initiatives, such as gender-neutral restrooms, Somali-awareness workshops, the Italian study-abroad program and many student awareness events allow students, faculty and staff to better understand diverse populations outside the classroom.

COTC faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution’s mission. While research is not required, COTC faculty are engaged in many scholarly activities. The program director of Engineering Technologies recently presented at several national conferences. Nursing faculty have written articles and presented papers at state and national meetings. General Education faculty have presented to colleagues in the areas of math, science, philosophy and communications during Faculty Development Days. Also, the college supports and encourages faculty to pursue advanced degrees.

In the classroom, student assignments are focused on discovery of knowledge. In many technical courses, a philosophy of transferring theory to practice is a major objective. Courses in the Engineering Technology, Digital Media Design, Culinary Science, Health Sciences, Early Childhood Education, Business Management, Human Services and Public Safety programs all have major components of knowledge acquisition through discovery.

Creative work is emphasized in many of General Education classes, such as English/Communications, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Mathematics. Many programs have capstone assignments, service learning projects and practicums/internships as part of a discovery/creative learning experience.

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3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

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

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

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

5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

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

Argument

**COTC has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and non-classroom roles of faculty.** The student-to-faculty ratio at the college is 16:1, which allows for academic support and relationship building in the classroom setting. In addition to instruction, faculty engage in academic program administration and assessment of student learning; serve as advisors to students; advise administration on academic matters of the college, such as curriculum and graduation requirements; serve on college committees; participate in professional and community organizations; and engage in professional development activities. Since approximately half of the full-time faculty have been with the college for five years or longer, their service allows for great continuity to carry out these functions of the faculty. In addition, full-time faculty are eligible to serve on the college’s curriculum and assessment committees.

Faculty from each discipline are responsible for developing the curriculum for their respective areas, ensuring that course content, textbooks and other curricular issues are consistent and relevant to each discipline. The curriculum is then presented to the Curriculum Committee, which makes recommendations to the vice president for academic affairs and implements relevant curriculum student outcome standards for all COTC classes. All faculty are involved in the assessment of student learning. Assessment occurs at many levels including the classroom and at the department, program, and college level. Details about faculty involvement in assessment are described in 4.B. COTC has highly qualified, motivated and engaged faculty dedicated to providing quality education and experiences to its students. The faculty's comprehensive engagement in these multiple roles ensures both continuity and sufficient numbers to carry out the work of the college.

**All COTC faculty are appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortia programs.** The college has clearly established academic credential requirements for all instructional staff. In accordance with HLC credentialing guidelines, faculty in most programs hold a
degree at least one level above that of the program in which they are teaching. Those teaching General Education courses typically hold a master’s degree or higher and have completed substantial graduate coursework in the discipline. Some technical or developmental courses require a bachelor’s degree, certification and/or professional experience. Faculty instructing in externally accredited programs, such as the Basic Police Academy, Emergency Medical Services and Health Sciences have the required degree or certification/licensure and background to meet the discipline and accreditation standards.

In connection with the HLC’s approval of the college’s request in 2009 to offer the Associate of Arts (A.A.) and Associate of Science (A.S.) degrees, the college understood that by moving into this arena, it needed to ensure that the credentials of its General Education faculty be upgraded further, especially as the credentials relate to part-time faculty teaching college-level courses in General Education. Recognizing this development, the college created a plan to upgrade the credentials of all of its General Education faculty. In response to the commission’s requirement that the college demonstrate improvement in the area of General Education faculty credentialing, the college established the goals of having 80% of the general education part-time faculty fully credentialed in FY10-11 and 100 percent of all General Education faculty having properly aligned advanced degrees by 2013. In an effort to further strengthen and ensure the uniform application of Higher Learning Commission standards, the college established a new full-time Director of Part-Time Faculty position in autumn 2014 to systematize the recruitment, selection and appointment of part-time faculty and to oversee certification of their credentials. A full list of general education faculty and their credentials is provided in the evidence file.

All applications for instructional positions have clearly defined requirements within the position posting, and screened by the appropriate academic dean or director. Faculty members’ credentials are reviewed, and faculty are carefully selected based upon their educational background and professional work experience in the educational and technical fields. Each instructor is individually credentialed by the department in which he/she is instructing. In addition to academic credentials, many COTC faculty have professional work experience that greatly enhances the classroom environment. For example, the Fire Science lead faculty member was fire chief of a large Ohio city for many years, and the program director of the Engineering Technology Department recently was employed by NASA in a summer jobs program. Job applicants are required to provide official copies of all transcripts and/or certifications upon hire. The credentials of all faculty, including part-time faculty teaching dual enrollment and contracted programs, are reviewed to ensure the necessary credentials for all courses taught. High school faculty teaching in the college’s High School Options programs and faculty teaching in contracted programs are required to meet the same credentialing requirement defined above. Official transcripts and credentialing documentation are maintained by the college.

**COTC faculty are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.** Full-time faculty are evaluated in accordance with the process defined in Article X of the Agreement Between The Central Ohio Technical College and the United Faculty/Central Ohio Technical College, AFT-OFT. Each year, faculty prepare a written narrative which includes identification of strengths and areas for growth, a description of progress toward outcomes of goals and objectives, and personal goals for the upcoming year. Faculty also meet with their designated administrator to discuss their performance and receive feedback. During the academic year in which the faculty member is up for contract renewal, he/she participates in collaborative, regularly scheduled comprehensive evaluations of their professional performance that includes review of goal setting and achievement, in-class administrative evaluation, evidence of professional development, and samples of faculty teaching materials. The faculty member provides detailed self-reflection and supporting evidence in their comprehensive faculty narrative.
Part-time faculty are evaluated by their designated academic program director who determines when and in what manner such evaluations are performed. Academic program directors may request the assistance of other full-time faculty members in undertaking the evaluations. A number of programs, such as Nursing, Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) and Human Services use a formal approach. In DMS, part-time faculty members who instruct face-to-face or hybrid didactic courses are evaluated every six months for the first two years. An **in-class evaluation** is conducted and the faculty member is given a copy of the evaluation providing feedback. After two years, in-class evaluations are conducted once per year. Part-time DMS faculty who instruct clinical courses are evaluated on the same schedule as described above. **On-site evaluations** (clinical visits) are conducted with the part-time faculty member to assess their performance in the clinical environment. In Nursing, part-time faculty are **evaluated** on an annual basis using a system that takes into account various **sources** of feedback. Evaluation conversations typically take place when the Nursing administrative staff are making “clinical rounds” and are face-to-face with the faculty member. In the Early Childhood Education program, part-time faculty are **observed** in the classroom **every other year**, and in the off year they turn in a **personal teaching reflection**. All Human Services part-time faculty are evaluated through an **in-class evaluation** during their first semester of teaching. In subsequent years, faculty are evaluated on a rotating basis by either an in-class evaluation or a **student evaluation review**. Other programs, such as Engineering Technologies, Radiologic Science Technology and Business Management Technology utilize a more informal approach that includes observing the class once a year, talking to the part-time faculty member and students, and responding to identified issues or problems.

Both full- and part-time faculty are evaluated by students in each course assigned. Each semester, students have the opportunity to evaluate the faculty in an online format. Additionally, students may share concerns by filling out a **Concern Form** and providing it to the appropriate dean/director for follow-up. After final grades are posted, faculty are provided access to the student feedback results. Administrators also have access to this information and utilize the information as a component of the faculty evaluation process.

**COTC has processes and resources for ensuring that faculty are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.** The college has many tools in place for both full- and part-time faculty to stay current in their disciplines and be skilled in their teaching roles. Each full-time faculty member is provided with an annual stipend for professional development. Faculty have the opportunity to apply for additional professional development **funds** through their department budgets or the Office of Academic Affairs. Department-specific continuing education is also conducted as applicable. For example, the Nursing department subscribes to online continuing education that is available to all their faculty in order to stay current in the latest nursing information. Professional subscriptions are provided for departments when requested.

Additionally, in accordance with the **Agreement Between The Central Ohio Technical College and The United Faculty/Central Ohio Technical College, AFT/OFT**, the college devotes five business days before the fall semester to **full-time faculty professional development**. The college also hosts two faculty development sessions for **part-time faculty** before the fall and spring semesters. Additionally, a focused development session is held each spring for faculty working in the dual enrollment program. Special seminars and breakout sessions are held at all professional development events with topics to help improve teaching and technology skills and bring awareness of new technology and services available.

Numerous opportunities are provided for faculty development through the Technology Enhanced Learning Center (telCenter). **Workshops and information sessions** are focused on the college’s
learning management system, online teaching methodologies and computer-assisted learning.

Resources for teaching and learning such as the COTC Faculty Library Resource Guide and COTC Adjunct Professor Resources are housed in the library. These guides are publicized at new and part-time faculty events, and a pamphlet is made available at such occasions.

As discussed in more detail in 5.A., additional professional development opportunities such as cultural experiences and personal development are offered by the Office of Human Resources for all faculty and staff. Faculty are also notified and encouraged to take part in webinars and information sessions that are offered by various other areas of the college, such as Financial Aid, Disability Services and Student Life.

**COTC faculty are accessible to their students.** In addition to face-to-face meetings, students may contact faculty through email or telephone, or use various communication functions available within the Moodle Course Management System. Full-time faculty are expected to maintain office hours and required to post them on their office doors each semester for easy reference for students. Additionally, office hours are listed on course syllabi, and faculty are required to provide their course and office schedules to the deans’ offices each semester. COTC students are generally pleased with the availability of faculty. As evidenced in the recent administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), COTC students engage frequently with their faculty. COTC’s benchmark score for Student-Faculty Interaction was 51.1, as compared to the 2014 CCSSE Cohort score of 50.0. When asked to indicate how often they had used e-mail to communicate with an instructor, 84.8 percent of COTC’s student respondents indicated often or very often. (The mean for COTC was 3.34 which was statistically significantly higher than each of the four comparison groups to which COTC compares). Further, 55.7 percent of the respondents indicated that they often discussed grades or assignments with an instructor. (The frequency percentage for COTC’s four comparison groups ranged from 46.5 percent to 54.0 percent).

**Staff members providing student support services are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.** At COTC, every position has a specific job description which gives the duties, expectations and qualifications for the position. The qualifications, including experience and education, vary depending on the type of work performed in the position. Interested parties may apply for positions online. After the closing date, all applications are forwarded to a selected screening committee to ensure that they meet the minimum qualifications for a position. Members of the hiring committee, under the supervision of the Office of Human Resources, review all the applications, meet and review their findings, hold interviews, and forward the top candidates to the hiring supervisor for further consideration. All staff providing support to students for academic advising and other student support (i.e., study skills strategies, accommodations for students with disabilities, counselors, career services, and multi-cultural affairs) have at least a bachelor’s degree; some have a master’s degree in the area related to their responsibilities. Members of the Office of Financial Aid have a minimum of a bachelor's degree or an associate's degree with several years of related experience.

Professional development funds are available within each department to be used for external conferences, seminars, webinars and professional memberships. Additionally, supervisors arrange appropriate internal training which varies according to department responsibilities. For example, financial aid advisors are trained on federal regulations and policies/procedures for the college and the college’s information management system. Academic advisors are trained on all college programs, policies/procedures, FERPA and the college’s information management system. As with faculty, all college staff is eligible to participate in the programs offered by the Office of Human Resources.
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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

Argument

COTC provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations. COTC students are supported according to their needs by a comprehensive advising system and by additional support services provided by the Center for Academic Success, the library, and the Offices of Student Life and Financial Aid. The Gateway is the center of the advising process for students. Gateway locations are open five days a week at all campus locations. Under the Office of Academic Affairs, the Center for Academic Success provides academic support for students enrolled in Communication, Math, EMS, and Health Sciences courses through learning labs, faculty assistance and individualized peer tutoring. Additionally, the center houses the Nursing Student Success Center. The library provides students with education opportunities in the area of learning resources and academic assistance on a multitude of levels. The library is a shared entity with Ohio State Newark. The Office of Student Life houses the tutoring center, counseling services, disability services, multi-cultural affairs, learning skills, career services and student activities. The Office of Financial Aid assists students as they apply for and manage their financial aid. An increase in the 3-year default rate for loans has made assisting students even more important.

COTC students believe their academic development is well supported; in the most recent (2014) Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) results, 75.4 percent of student respondents said that COTC emphasizes the support they need to succeed at the college quite a bit or very much. This percentage compares favorably to the four comparison groups used by the college (the frequency percentages for the four comparison groups ranged from 73.9 percent to 76.8 percent).

COTC provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which they are adequately prepared.

The Center for Academic Success is a division of COTC’s campus that deals with academic support specifically in areas of math, communication, EMS, and nursing. Math Labs are available on all campuses where students can receive help with the math courses in which they are currently enrolled as well as preparation for future classes. The Math Lab also offers support for students who wish to review before placement testing. The Communications Resources Center (CRC) is available on all
The main goal of the CRC is to provide assistance to students to improve their written and spoken communications skills so they can be successful in current or future communications courses such as public speaking, reading or composition. The Nursing Student Success Center is available for all students currently enrolled in the Nursing program at the college. Goals for the center include providing assistance to students to help them identify academic challenges, identify resources which will aid in their academic endeavors, developing appropriate remediation activities, and further developing their NCLEX Success Plan.

For subjects that are not served by the Center for Academic Success, students are referred to the Tutoring Center where they can receive either one-on-one or group tutoring. Students can receive up to two hours of tutoring per week, per subject. The Tutoring Center also provides students access to eTutoring. The Ohio eTutoring Collaborative is an educational organization dedicated to serving the academic support needs of Ohio's students at all Ohio universities and colleges and their related programs. The collaborative is committed to providing electronically delivered support in a student-centric environment that prepares students for personal success and responsible citizenship.

The Office of Student Life provides support services to both COTC and Ohio State Newark students. The office employs a learning skills specialist who provides advice and resources to enhance students' learning inside and outside of the classroom. Areas of support include study skills, time management, note taking, test-taking strategies and learning through technology. Services are offered in a variety of formats such as workshops, classroom presentations, on-demand online seminars, and individualized assistance via in-person and online meetings. Additionally, counseling services are provided free of charge to all currently enrolled students to attend to their mental health and emotional well-being. The Office for Disability Services (ODS) provides accommodations and support services for students with disabilities to maximize educational potential and develop independence to the fullest extent possible. ODS also provides adaptive technology services for students who need academic adjustments. These technologies include Dragon NaturallySpeaking, JAWS, magnifiers, and Read and Write Gold. Also, COTC is a Servicemembers Opportunity College (SOC), and has dedicated staff members to provide assistance to veterans and active duty service members with their transitions to college.

COTC utilizes multiple resources and measures to properly place students into coursework where they can succeed. The college has a mandatory placement policy where ACT, SAT or COMPASS placement is used for Math, Reading and Writing. Prior college coursework is also taken into consideration for placement into courses. Additionally, COTC uses high school coursework to place students into appropriate science courses. COMPASS placement test preparation is free and available through the Center for Academic Success. In person preparation is also available to students through the center. All placement results are reviewed with the student by an academic advisor.

COTC has many resources available to help direct students into a program of study for which they are adequately prepared. All prospective and current students are provided access to FOCUS 2 to help direct them to a career path that may best fit them. FOCUS 2 is a self-paced, online career and education planning tool for college students that enables students to self-assess their career-relevant personal qualities and explore career fields in areas of study that are most compatible with their assessment results. FOCUS 2 also provides valuable occupation information. Students who complete FOCUS 2 are encouraged to meet with the manager of career services to discuss possible programs of study.

Informational meetings are another way in which students are assisted in determining a program of study. These meetings are regularly scheduled throughout the academic year for all of the Health Sciences programs, the Police Academy and the Engineering Technologies. During these meetings, specifics on the programs, admission requirements, expectations, and licensing and advancement
opportunities are discussed. Students who have felony convictions are reviewed by a board to
determine their admission status. This process helps to direct students towards career paths for which
they are eligible for employment after completion of their program. Additional advising is provided
for students who may have criminal misdemeanors that prevent them from certain practicum and
internships.

**COTC provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.** COTC
provides academic advising services to all enrolled students through a dual advising model. Upon
registration, every student is assigned to an academic advisor in the Gateway based upon an alpha-
split model. Academic advisors are professional advisors trained in all academic programs offered at
COTC. Through the generalist **advisor role**, academic advisors assist students with admissions,
program information, course planning, new student orientation, registration, and understanding
policies and procedures. Academic advisors are positioned at all campus locations and provide
services to students through walk-ins and scheduled appointments, telephone, email and program
information meetings. Additionally, academic advisors conduct ongoing outreach to at-risk students
through **Retention Alert** and refer students to appropriate campus resources. Additional outreach is
provided to first-time enrolled and continuing students through **call center efforts**, checking on
progress and encouraging registration in the upcoming semester.

Each academic advisor is assigned as a **liaison** to one or more academic programs and acts as the
program area expert for relationship-building with the Office of Academic Affairs. Furthermore,
through the liaison role, academic advisors attend advisory board meetings, update the program **Fact
Sheets**, manage a **program training manual**, and provide program training and updates to all advisors.

Additionally, all non-health students are assigned a program-specific faculty advisor based upon
declared major, and pre-health students are assigned to a program-specific faculty advisor upon
acceptance into the health program. Prior to acceptance, pre-health students work primarily with
academic advisors in the Gateway. **Faculty advisors** provide guidance related to program and course
requirements; career advising; academic concerns; referrals to campus resources; placement into
internships, practicums, field experience or clinicals; petitions to graduate; and transfer options for
continued education opportunities. Faculty advisors provide services through regular office hours
(walk-ins or appointments), email, phone and classroom.

Nursing program faculty advisors work extensively with their advisees on tracking progress toward
degree completion. Through the use of Retention Alert, these advisors conduct early intervention with
students who are experiencing academic issues and refer them to appropriate campus resources such
as the Nursing Student Success Center, which is staffed by full-time Nursing faculty. All Nursing
students are required to meet one-on-one with a Nursing faculty advisor to review course selection
and receive approval prior to registration.

**COTC provides the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and
learning.** As a technical college COTC is committed to using the most recent IT educational tools and
offerings in support of its classroom teaching and learning environment. Advanced AV/Multimedia
systems are installed in every classroom at the Newark campus and all three extended campus
locations. Technology is integrated into SMART teacher stations so that a fluid and easy-to-use
learning environment can be provided using multiple technology and video presentation methods. A
few of these include the presentation of power point slides, document cameras, internet-based
educational content and CD/DVD programs. There are 731 computers dedicated to classrooms on the
Newark campus. Of these, 195 are located in open student labs that can be used by all students. An
additional 317 computers are available for student use at the three extended campus locations. All
student-facing computers are replaced **every three years** to ensure current technology is available to
COTC has invested heavily in advanced technology tools for faculty. These include lecture capture applications such as Panopto and the use of other video streaming systems to support course objectives. The ITS department has resourced a Video Graphics Office that provides video editing and production services to assist faculty in finalizing their course content and incorporating it into the college's Learning Management System. Equipment such as cameras, video cameras, and table devices are also made available for faculty use. One noteworthy program that began during Autumn Semester 2014 is the Faculty iPad program for teaching and learning. Devices and various applications are provided to faculty for use in the classroom, and workshops will be available for them to share and learn new ways to incorporate tablet devices into the classroom environment.

The college maintains a variety of laboratory teaching spaces for hands-on learning. Three well-equipped science laboratories are maintained on the Newark campus and one at both the Coshocton and Knox campuses. In Pataskala, the college partners with Licking Heights High School to use their scientific lab space and equipment. These labs are equipped to support all of the needs for the natural science courses (i.e., biology, chemistry, physics, anatomy/physiology and environmental science). These resources allow students to conduct chemical experiments, dissect preserved materials, study bacteria, solve environmental issues and learn about many other topics. A full-time lab coordinator is responsible for the Newark, Knox and Pataskala campuses, and a part-time lab coordinator maintains the Coshocton lab. The coordinators are responsible for preparing lab materials, maintaining equipment, conducting safety audits and ordering supplies.

Students in the Digital Media Design program have access to a Mac computer lab with Adobe Creative Suite Software and Final Cut Professional. Students can also check out digital and video cameras from the lab coordinator when necessary for their assignments.

Nursing laboratories are well-equipped on each COTC campus that offers the Nursing major (Newark, Coshocton and Mount Vernon). Each lab provides a variety of learning tools such as medical manikins, demonstration and practice models, medical equipment (i.e., blood pressure cuffs, IV pumps, traction supplies, etc.), and disposable practice supplies (i.e., IV catheters, bandages, syringes, etc.). The medical manikins used are both mid-fidelity and high-fidelity learning tools offering a more realistic experience for students. Manikins are able to produce lung, heart and abdominal sounds, have palpable pulses, and are controlled by the instructor using computer technology. This technology allows for a unique and changing learning environment for each student. Students utilize the lab environment for required class time as well as optional open lab skill practice sessions. The college employs two full-time and one part-time staff members to maintain the three Nursing labs. All full-time Nursing faculty assist in maintaining the labs during set-up and tear down of learning activities.

In addition to traditional classroom space and lab facilities, the Health Sciences technologies and programs within the Institute for Public Safety (i.e., EMS and Fire Science) utilize a variety of clinical practice sites including hospitals, long-term care and acute care facilities, clinics, and schools to meet the learning needs of their students. Clinical affiliation agreements are secured with each site identifying the practice area that will best meet the needs of students while in the clinical rotation. The following academic programs currently have affiliation agreements with external organizations: Business Management Technology, Digital Media Design Technology, Diagnostic Medical Sonography Technology, Emergency Medical Services Technology, Radiologic Science Technology, Surgical Technology, Early Childhood Education Technology, Human Services Technology, Fire Science Technology, Manufacturing Technology, and Nursing Technology.
Full-time faculty make site visits each term to assess the quality of the learning environment. Students also complete an evaluation of the clinical site at the end of each semester. Clinical sites and experiences meet or exceed external accreditation standards.

All library resources are shared with The Ohio State University at Newark, allowing students to access books and journals owned by OSU Libraries. This partnership provides access to inter-library loan services so faculty, staff and students are able to request articles and books from around the world to support their research and studies. The main library is located on the Newark campus, with satellite libraries located on each of the extended campuses, providing students with research and informational resources at all locations. COTC is a member of OhioLINK, a statewide consortium of over 88 college and university libraries. As a member, COTC students, faculty and staff have access to numerous resources including books, articles and videos. Members of OhioLINK can request materials from partner libraries and have them sent directly to their home campus, or visit the library of any OhioLINK institution to locate their materials. This consortium also provides access to over 150 online databases which students can access from both campus and home computers. These online databases contain peer-reviewed research articles, newspaper articles, statistics and videos to assist students in their academic coursework.

On the Newark campus, the library is open 75 hours per week during the autumn and spring semesters, and 69 hours per week during the summer semester. To assist students after hours, librarians have created resource guides which are websites specific to majors and courses that provide students with a brief overview of library resources and links to a number of recommended databases and websites.

In addition to the library, COTC has an Educational Media and Resource Center located on the Newark campus. The center provides space, resources and materials for students to use in planning and creating teaching materials for young children. It also provides a space for students to work on assignments for their Early Childhood Development courses.

The college provides students guidance in the effective use of research and information services. Three professional librarians, with offices in the Warner Library at the Newark campus, provide research services to all students. Numerous COTC courses, especially Composition I & II, include research paper assignments in their course objectives. Therefore, instructional sessions offered during these classes or any COTC class at the request of the instructor focus on finding and developing a topic, determining and effectively using appropriate search terms, and evaluating and locating materials that best fit the topic. Sessions are offered on all of COTC’s campuses and are also arranged for College Credit Plus courses (dual enrollment courses offered at area high schools) at their locations. The college adheres to ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for higher education.

The Warner Library website serves as the homepage for both local and online students. From this site, students are offered the opportunity to call, e-mail or chat with a librarian or set up a face-to-face meeting. Also via the website, comprehensive research guides are provided. The general research guide provides a starting place for students while specialized resource guides focus on specific technologies and classes. Library-created tutorials that walk students through the research process and assist them in locating pertinent materials are available via the website and can be embedded into the course management system class sites at the request of faculty members.
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3.E - Core Component 3.E

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

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution’s mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students’ educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Argument

The college’s co-curricular programs are suited to its mission and contribute to the educational experience of students. One of the college’s primary objectives to enhance student success is to provide an exceptional learning environment that prepares each student with the knowledge, skills and values to succeed in a dynamic world. Such an environment calls for a rich array of co-curricular programs and activities. The Office of Student Life is primarily responsible for student activities, including student clubs and organizations, career services, and multi-cultural affairs. Student Life is a shared office, serving both COTC and Ohio State Newark students.

The Office of Student Activities along with the assistant director of student life provides diverse programming to enhance the cultural, intellectual and social growth of the campus community. As a result of student feedback, the campus developed a successful series of family-friendly programs which are offered monthly. In addition, leadership opportunities are encouraged through various student organizations that are based on a mission of academic, faith-based, multi-cultural, recreational, service, social, special interest or wellness.

There are over 40 student clubs, organizations, cohort programs and volunteer programs on campus including collegiate athletics (men’s basketball, women’s basketball, men’s baseball, women’s softball, volleyball and golf) and many intramural sports. These programs represent the visible and accessible avenue to student involvement. The interests of these groups include but are not limited to sports, social, cultural, religion, and politics (i.e., Active Minds, IMANI Scholars, Student Government, Student Ambassadors, CAB, Ebonye Horizons, Light House, etc.). Students learn soft skills such as time management, communication, team building, leadership development, project planning, preparing meeting agendas, and the art of delegating and negotiating.

Through events and programs, the Office of Multi-cultural Affairs promotes cultural awareness, enhances exposure, and creates a learning environment of cultural differences for students, staff and faculty. The office strives to develop comprehensive programs to increase retention of minority students for academic success and professional development as well as collaborate with other offices and the community to create an inviting and relaxed atmosphere that promotes inclusiveness for all students.

The Office of Career Development and Experiential Learning Services provides students and graduates with individualized career planning and consultation with job search strategies, labor market information, and assistance with résumés and interviewing skills, amongst other services.

The Testing Center administers college readiness exams, including COMPASS and ATI TEAS, as
well as classroom testing, distance learning testing and missed classroom tests. It also supports the testing accommodations coordinated via the Office for Disability Services.

Atypical for a technical college in Ohio, COTC’s students have access to **on-campus housing** through the partnership with Ohio State Newark. The Newark campus residence halls have fully furnished kitchens, living rooms, dining rooms and bedrooms. Applications for on-campus student housing are processed according to the student’s date of admission to the college. Access to on-campus housing enhances retention and academic achievement. COTC also provides students with a roommate finder application and an **off-campus housing informational packet** to facilitate additional housing.

**The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students’ educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission.** COTC is a technical college with a mission focused on workforce development. It is firmly rooted in the tradition of community engagement and service to multiple community constituencies. Both education and co-curricular programs connect students, faculty and staff with external communities to help students develop the knowledge and skills that will better enable them to succeed in a diverse workplace and society.

A number of faculty members incorporate a hands-on, service-learning component into their courses so that students can apply what they learn to real-world situations involving a local civic-oriented need. Examples include:

- **ECE-190 Professionalism in Education** - Students participate in service learning that is agreed upon by the class with a nonprofit agency or program. They document the experience and make a final presentation connecting the value for children and families.
- **ECE-170 Children’s Literature** - In collaboration with The Newark Public preschools, Pathways of Licking County and the Dual enrolled class at C-tec, students prepare a parent event focused on children’s literature. Based on a topic like Diversity in Children’s Literature, students prepare posters and an active learning experience. They then present in a post session format for parents of young children in the licking county area. Parents and their children are invited to come and experience the value of reading to young children. The Newark Public Preschool programs passes out free books to parents. Students reflect on the experience in reaching out to parents as partners in the educational process.
- **NURS-201 Advanced Adult Health** - Qualified students in NURS-201 conduct **service projects** as a part of their work toward induction into Alpha Delta Nu, the honor society for associate degree nursing. Students who meet academic criteria for the honor society must successfully conduct a professional, service-oriented project in order to be inducted.
- **NURS-111 Introduction to Adult Health** – With the intent of make this a course requirement to reinforce community health concepts, the Nursing program launched a collaborative in Autumn 2014 with the Red Cross and students in the NURS-111 course. Students are offered the opportunity to complete training for the **First Aid Services Team (FAST)** and then volunteer to participate at community events where the Red Cross provides medical/first aid support. The first event is the Frederickstown Tomato Festival.

In September 2014, the college entered into a unique partnership with **Licking Memorial Hospital** (LMH) to bring masters prepared LMH nurses into the classroom to present certain content areas to students. This assures the content being presented is current and directly from the practice environment. For example, the vice president of patient care at LMH will be presenting **Medicare Core Measures and HCAHPS** (patient experience/satisfaction) to the graduating AD students this semester.

Internships and practicums also provide students with opportunities to practice social responsibility.
Students seeking experiential learning opportunities can obtain the support of the Office of Career Development and Experiential Learning Services in identifying potential opportunities. Additionally, the office provides guidance on how to maximize the experience, address employer expectations, and make the experience more meaningful. Area employers looking to host students for these experiences can receive assistance in the development of internship descriptions and announcements, framing work experiences, and facilitating a connection to students and faculty in the appropriate programs of study. Additionally, the office hosts an annual Career Fair each spring. In 2014, 81 businesses, medical facilities and organizations from the region participated. Employers represented all technologies, and more than 200 students and alumni attended. Informal evaluation indicates that every year one or more students obtain employment through the Career Fair.

The college’s student employment program provides students with the opportunity to gain hands-on work experience while earning money to help with educational expenses. Opportunities are available across the college in a variety of areas such as admissions, advising, student life, the library, athletics, food service, safety & security, multi-cultural affairs, disability services, financial aid, tutoring, communication academic center, career development, information technology services, and fees & deposits.

Nursing students have an opportunity to serve the campus and community through involvement in Alpha Delta Nu, an honor society associated with the National Association of Associate Degree Nursing. High-achieving students in all academic programs are eligible for membership in Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society of two-year colleges. The society’s hallmarks are leadership, scholarship, service and fellowship. Service on academic program advisory committees provides additional opportunities for students to be engaged with the community. All committees are recommended to have student members, both currently enrolled and program graduates. Students who serve gain knowledge and experience by attending meetings with executives and leaders of corporations, government agencies and non-profit organizations and are the experts in the community.

The college has a deeply rooted history of service to its constituents, and is dedicated to outreach and engagement activities and initiatives within the communities it serves. For example, the Engineering Department offers an Egg Drop competition for area high school juniors and seniors. The objective of the competition is to design a device to protect a large egg from breaking when it is dropped from a height of approximately 22 feet. In 2014, 120 area high school students participated. Another example is the Diversity through Artistry program that engages faculty, staff and student volunteers with area third graders in an eight-week art project that helps college students and elementary children gain valuable insight into global awareness and appreciation through various art mediums. A campus art display and reception follows the end of the project for volunteers, third graders, family members and city dignitaries.

The college participates in economic development activities vital to the region, and is committed to partnering with diverse groups and individuals to strengthen community ties. This involvement extends beyond memberships in traditional organizations, and is evidenced by activities in Coshocton and Knox counties as well as Pataskala and Newark. The college hosts a wide range of external constituent activities and events at each of its campuses. For example, on its Newark campus, the college, in partnership with Ohio State Newark, hosts the annual Chamber of Commerce Groundhog Breakfast that attracts over 450 business and civic leaders and community members each year. The Roscoe Village Foundation board meetings are routinely held on the Coshocton campus. The foundation is the governing board of Roscoe Village, which is a historic tourist area within the community. Roscoe Village was once a bustling port along the Ohio and Erie Canal; it is now home to shops, restaurants and tours of the historic buildings.
In addition to events on campus, COTC is active and visible in the communities it serves. Students, through activities with the Office of Student Life or their academic programs, participate in an array of community service activities. For example, Nursing students volunteer in the medical tents at events such as the Coshocton County Mud Run, assist at blood donor events, and have assisted with and presented stations such as various first aid responses, drug/alcohol awareness, etc. to help Girl Scouts to meet badge requirements.

The college invests resources annually in sponsorships of community events and activities such as county fairs, festivals, education-related activities and other events. Specific examples include the 2014 Newark Strawberry Festival held the last weekend of May on the square in downtown Newark and the Saturday night fireworks at the Coshocton Hot Air Balloon Festival. These sponsorships vary in terms of the type and size of attendance, as well as in the specific methods used to promote COTC’s sponsorship (i.e., display tables, program advertisements, live announcements, pre-event marketing, banners posted at the events, and post-event thank you advertisements). The community and the college both benefit from sincere goodwill and long-term relations, which are critical to the college's ability to meet its mission.

The Workforce Development Innovation Center (WDIC) offers opportunities for innovative partnerships between higher education and businesses with a focus on improving the skills of the workforce to increase Ohio’s economic development and competitive edge. The WDIC provides customized contract training (both credit and not-for-college credit), technical skills training, support for entrepreneurial needs, and cost-effective, innovative solutions to specific business challenges. The WDIC manager works closely with the college academic leadership to deliver training that supports degree programs currently offered and to pilot training for programs under consideration for the future.

COTC is a formal, contractual partner with ABLE (Adult Basic Literacy and Education) in the three county area. Ohio ABLE programs provide free services for individuals who need assistance acquiring the skills to be successful in college for post-secondary education, training and ultimately employment. Specifically, the Transitions to College program provides instruction to eliminate barriers many students experience when taking their next educational step whether it’s after high school, achieving their GED or re-entering the educational setting after many years. Free instruction and learning services are offered to any adult needing pre-college coursework in reading, writing or math based on COTC’s placement assessment (COMPASS) or through a referral. In Knox County, the college provides office space and a classroom and in Coshocton, the campus serves as the only GED test site in the county.

A healthy, economically vibrant community requires a strong collaboration among business, education, and government. Licking, Knox and Coshocton counties Job and Family Services (LCJFS), in conjunction with OhioMeansJobs, have developed independent employment and training centers. These are excellent community resources for employers and job seekers, providing access to services from local and state economic and education partners in one convenient location. As an educational partner, COTC Gateway staff work collaboratively to visit the centers to meet with potential students, both walk-ins and via appointments.

COTC has a proven and measurable economic impact in the communities it serves. According to an economic impact analysis conducted in 2014 by the independent research firm, Impact Data Source, COTC has a local economic impact of $58 million and supports 705 direct and indirect jobs in the three-county region of Knox, Coshocton and Licking counties. Based on the study of 2011-12 fiscal data, these jobs contribute $29.9 million annually to the local economy in workers’ earnings.
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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

COTC employs a variety of both internal and external methods to ensure that courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded. On- and off-campus courses must follow consistent syllabus guidelines and are subject to a high level of continuous review to ensure consistency.

The college’s general education requirements provide an educational foundation for all degree-seeking students while also satisfying the guidelines published by the Ohio Board of Regents for two-year programs. These requirements demonstrate a commitment to empowering students with education in both the arts and sciences, thereby arming them with the tools necessary for lifelong learning.

COTC maintains a generous student-to-faculty ratio which allows for academic support and relationship building. Since the majority of faculty members have been with the college for several years, there is greater continuity so that classroom and non-classroom functions remain consistent. All faculty must uphold established credential requirements and are regularly evaluated by program directors and their students. In addition to the faculty requirements, all staff members working in a role of student support must have the appropriate education and training as outlined in their specific job description.

Infrastructure and resources necessary to support both students and faculty in their learning and teaching endeavors are provided by the college. Available support services for students include admissions, financial aid, tutoring, academic placement and career services, among others. A few examples of support provided to faculty include technology, laboratories and teaching space, and professional development.

Beyond academics, COTC offers students a large array of co-curricular opportunities including but not limited to student activities, service learning, collegiate athletics, internships and practicums, and student employment. COTC students also have access to on-campus housing due to the college’s cost-shared partnership with Ohio State Newark.

Sources

There are no sources.
4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Argument

COTC maintains a practice of regular program reviews. Following the May 2008 HLC accreditation site visit, a program review workgroup, comprised of faculty, staff and administrators from various disciplines and departments, was established to develop a new program review process that provides for the rigorous examination of each program. The workgroup developed a comprehensive process that includes indicators as to the viability, necessity, adequacy and consistency with the college’s mission. Additionally, underlying principles, a framework, a review cycle, and a report template were developed. The program review process is linked to the assessment of student learning and to the budgetary process. The new process included the provision of data regarding students’ meeting course- and program-level learning objectives, as well as the justification for maintaining or increasing funding levels in support of the program under review. Several programs underwent program reviews under the new program review process. However, the college discovered that the new program review process required streamlining, so modifications were implemented in spring 2012. The revised process requires all programs to meet with the college’s Executive Leadership Team to review program strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, along with
aligning program goals with the college’s strategic plan. Additionally, a review schedule for all programs through 2024 was established.

In the autumn of 2012, the college experienced an unexpected decline in enrollment that resulted in a significant budget shortfall. As part of the three-phase budget adjustment strategy, the executive leadership conducted an analysis of the viability of all current academic programs. Each academic program was reviewed using six identified metrics: level of student enrollment, number of completers, fiscal health, job placement, accreditation status and market/community need. This information along with comprehensive faculty data was used to determine the effectiveness of each program. As a result of the study, a number of programs were identified as performing below a sustainable level. Over the past 24 months, academic leadership has been working with program faculty to determine strategies for program improvement. Additional changes resulting from the study included revising the program review process to allow accredited programs to align their self-study development with the program review schedule, making major adjustments to the master schedule to improve stability and section efficiency, and initiating work to restructure and share the academic support service areas with Ohio State Newark.

The program review schedule, program review questions, and program review purpose and guidelines were reviewed and redesigned in 2012. Program reviews are scheduled at five-year intervals. The review schedule for programs receiving accreditation, licensure or approval from external agencies is adjusted so that the required self-study coincides with the college’s five-year review cycle established for these programs to avoid unnecessary duplication of work. The review process begins approximately one semester prior to the scheduled completion date with an extensive self-study whereby faculty/program directors and the dean collaborate in gathering data to answer the 23 questions asked in the review process. The process ends with faculty/program directors presenting an executive summary to the president and the Executive Leadership Team, where actions based on review findings are considered and implemented. Examples of action plans include seeking external accreditation for the Human Services program, making budget adjustments to support program goals, and generating contractual agreements with public and private entities. In developmental education, changes in coursework and student requirements resulted allowing students to enter credit course work sooner.

The program review process is a valuable part of ensuring programs are current, reflect the goals, objectives and mission of the college, and provide quality educational experiences.

COTC evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, and has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer. COTC has defined policies on the evaluation and transcription of all transfer credit, non-traditional credit and other forms of credit for prior learning. The college has a designated administrator to evaluate transfer credit and all forms of non-traditional course credit. In addition, the college has policies in place to ensure the proper articulation and transcription of statewide courses such as TAG, CTAGS and Ohio Transfer Module.

Evaluation of transfer credit occurs for all courses transcribed for college credit at COTC. Guidelines for transferring college credit from another regionally or nationally accredited institution is outlined in the academic policies and procedures. Transfer credit is evaluated and articulated by a member of the COTC Gateway using course descriptions from the Transfer Evaluation System (TES) from College Source. TES is a resource the college purchased that allows the transcript evaluator to examine almost any college course description from any regionally or nationally accredited institution, which helps uphold the quality of the course work the college transfers. If the course cannot be determined as a college-equivalent course through the course description, the course syllabi may need to be provided
by the student to determine the possibility of transfer credit.

Articulating credit for prior learning, and non-traditional credit is outlined in the college’s academic policies and procedures. The college offers diverse opportunities for students to earn non-traditional credit. A student can earn non-traditional credit through CLEP, AP exams offered through College Board, credit equivalency for training, portfolio evaluation and proficiency exam credit. The college has clear standards on the AP credits it accepts and the minimum scores needed for all of the exams. Additionally, the college requires a minimum score of 50 for all CLEP exams. Outlined in the academic policies and procedures is a list of the exams currently accepted by the institution.

Credit equivalency for training is available for students who have earned a specific industry certification that is recognized by professional organizations and/or groups, and are looking to apply that certification towards college credit. Another option students have for earning non-traditional credit is portfolio evaluation. For the purposes of this policy, a portfolio is a collection of documented evidence demonstrating a student's skills and knowledge. This evidence is relevant to the specific course for which the student is requesting credit for prior learning and/or experience. In order to be deemed course creditworthy, the portfolio's contents must demonstrate that the student has met all of the course goals and objectives identified in the standardized course syllabus for the course in question. The academic dean or director will appoint a faculty member to review the student’s portfolio contents to determine if the student has already met the goals and objectives of the standardized course syllabus. Additionally, students can achieve non-traditional course credit through proficiency examinations. Proficiency examinations allow students the opportunity to earn COTC course credit by demonstrating competencies developed through previous education, life experience, or self-study. The college uses nationally validated examinations to determine credit. If no national exam is available, a proficiency examination may be developed by the faculty on a limited basis. The exam is reviewed and approved by the academic dean/director and the vice president for academic affairs and must assess all goals set forth in the standardized course syllabus for that course. Upon approval, the Office of Academic Affairs will add the exam to the COTC Official Proficiency Examination listing. Approved exams are valid for two academic years unless the course curriculum changes. If the course curriculum changes within the two-year period, a new proficiency exam must be developed. After two academic years, the examination is no longer valid and may not be given. A new exam must be developed and approved following the above standards.

Transfer credit policies are outlined in the college’s published academic policies and procedures. To ensure the quality of the credits that the college accepts, COTC only accepts transfer credit from other regionally or nationally accredited institutions. In addition, the college accepts international transcripts, but only after they have been evaluated by a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). As an Ohio public higher education institution, COTC is a member of the University System of Ohio (USO) which comprises all public two- and four-year higher education institutions in the state. This provides guaranteed portability of courses approved for transfer within the USO. The USO-approved transfer courses are comprised of Transfer Assurance Guide (TAG) courses, Ohio Transfer Module (OTM) courses and Career-Technical Assurance Guide (C-TAG) courses. TAG courses are generally associated with courses that students takes in their major or plan of study. OTM courses fulfill freshman or sophomore level General Education requirements such as English, Mathematics, Arts and Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Natural Sciences, and in some cases, Interdisciplinary Studies. C-TAGs refer to course credit for students in secondary or adult career-technical schools who successfully complete specified technical programs and thus have technical credit transfer to public colleges and universities. Technical transfer courses older than 10 years at the time of planned graduation may need to be repeated and should be discussed with an academic advisor. Additionally, no more than 75 percent of the credits required for the degree or certificate will be accepted through the combination of non-
traditional credit transfer options.

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

The college maintains authority over the quality and rigor of courses, programs and the qualifications of program faculty. The authority rests with the Office of Academic Affairs and faculty-driven committees such as the Curriculum Committee and the Student Learning Assessment Steering Committee. Quality and rigor are achieved through effective collaboration among faculty, administration and program-specific advisory committees.

Course prerequisites are identified in the development of course or program proposals. These proposals are then submitted to the Curriculum Committee by faculty through academic deans or directors for review and approval prior to implementation. All course prerequisites are explicitly stated in the published course descriptions, and these prerequisites are reviewed on an annual basis.

Rigor of courses is ensured through both internal and external processes. Internally, courses are developed and recommended for approval through the Curriculum Committee. Externally, courses are submitted to the Ohio Board of Regents and reviewed through a state-mandated process for TAGs, OTMs and CTAGs. These processes validate consistency and rigor as well as transferability of the courses. Additionally, program review and advisory committees aid in providing rigor assessment.

Expectations for student learning are clearly articulated at the college, program and course levels. The college has identified core competencies that should be achieved by every student completing a plan of study. Programs have identified student learning outcomes that students accomplish upon completion of that program. Finally, every course utilizes a syllabus to clearly identify the course-level student learning outcomes as well as the performance objectives that each student must meet to successfully pass the course. This process is monitored by the college’s Curriculum Committee. All syllabi are standardized and reviewed by faculty and administration every semester for compliance.

Access to learning resources is assured to all students enrolled at COTC through an established infrastructure under the authority of designated leadership. COTC shares several student support services with its Newark campus partner, The Ohio State University at Newark. For example, the library, Tutoring Center, learning skills specialist, counseling services and disability services are shared resources. Other resources are specific to COTC such as the Center for Academic Success and the Math and Writing Labs. Certain programs also provide focused student support, such as the Nursing department's Nursing Student Success (NSS) program housed within the Center for Academic Success. These resources are listed on the syllabi and linked to the corresponding websites.

Faculty qualifications are assured by the Office of Academic Affairs in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources. Academic deans and directors review application materials and transcripts to ensure compliance with minimum requirements established by the college in accordance with standards and guidelines set forth by both the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR). In addition, many programs, such as Nursing, also must comply with state regulations and national accreditation standards regarding faculty qualifications.

Dual credit courses and dual enrollment options must comply with all standard college courses offered by COTC. College faculty review all course syllabi submitted by dual enrollment instructors
to ensure consistency and compliance. Faculty qualifications are consistent with those mentioned above and are assured through a review process by academic deans and directors. However, Ohio is currently transforming the multiple dual enrollment programs across the state into one program, College Credit Plus, which will require all high schools to participate beginning in the 2015-2016 academic year. Each public high school must offer at least one dual enrollment course and must work to develop two pathway opportunities through College Credit Plus—one that allows students to earn 15 transcripted credits and one that allows students to earn 30 transcripted credits. These pathways must be developed in coordination with at least one partnering institution of higher education. COTC is currently in the process of restructuring its program to align with the new statewide mandates.

**COTC takes great pride in seeking, acquiring and maintaining specialized accreditation for its academic programs.** At present, COTC has national program accreditation for the following associate degree programs: Early Childhood Education Technology, Diagnostic Medical Sonography Technology, Surgical Technology, Radiologic Science Technology, and Nursing Technology. Additional programs including Business Management Technology, Human Services Technology, Emergency Medical Services, Engineering Technology programs and Fire Science Technology have begun the process for obtaining accreditation and are at various stages in the process. A master document that tracks the status of program accreditation visits and a brief statement of the current status along with the status of programs in the process of seeking accreditation is presented to the Board of Trustees and the Strategic Planning Council and is available on the college website.

**COTC evaluates the success of its graduates and assures that the degree or certificate program prepares the student for advanced study or employment.** Job placement has been tracked as an institutional Key Performance Indicator (KPI) since 2009 as part of the college's strategic plan. Job placement is a measure of graduates who responded that they were currently employed, either full or part-time, and their area of employment was directly or somewhat directly related to their COTC education. The job placement rate for 2007-2008 graduates was 77 percent. The rate decreased to as low as 64 percent during subsequent academic years but returned to 77 percent in academic year 2012-2013.

Graduates from the college are encouraged to complete additional education and many articulation agreements are in place to assist the graduates. Periodically and in conjunction with program review, queries are sent to the National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker (NSCST) system to determine if the college's graduates are earning additional degrees. In the summer of 2014, an annual query was sent for all graduates who completed a credential at COTC from 2008 through 2013. In August 2013, a query that included 3526 graduate identifiers was sent to NSCST; and 1,355 records were found and returned detail data. Of the 1,355 graduates, 369 or 27 percent were found to have completed at least one four-year degree. Of those 369 graduates, 9 had completed 2 four-year degrees and 12 had completed both a four-year degree and a graduate degree. Of the 986 who were found to have pursued additional education but had not yet earned a credential, 559 or 56.7 percent were still enrolled in 2014.

**Employer satisfaction** with graduates' education is an indirect measure of student success. This metric has been tracked as part of the strategic plan since 2009. Employers are offered three response options: not satisfied, satisfied, or very satisfied. Employers are surveyed and asked their level of satisfaction with the graduate employee’s education. The number of responses of "very satisfied" and "satisfied" are added together and divided by the total responses to calculate the percentage of employers satisfied with the graduate’s education. The baseline from winter 2007 was 95 percent. The rate was slightly lower at 90 percent until spring 2014 at which time 96% of employers who have hired COTC graduates in the past four years and responded to all survey items indicated they are satisfied.
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The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

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

Argument

COTC has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

The college clearly defines student learning outcomes for each program of study and individual course. Program learning outcomes are clearly stated online under each program of study, and through program fact sheets distributed both on the website and by the Gateway. Student learning outcomes include common general education outcomes in all programs. In the technologies, learning goals and outcomes include skills and professional competence essential for an employee working in a diverse workforce. They are also influenced by the specific goals and ethical standards of the field of study. The Nursing Program, for example, includes goals for professional behavior, evidence-based analysis and teamwork in its learning outcomes.

The assessment of program learning outcomes is accomplished through program reviews. Every program at the college is included on the program review calendar to ensure that programs are reviewed regularly. In the review, programs must assess the extent to which students are meeting the program’s learning outcomes. Data regarding student completion in specific courses, persistence throughout the program, and graduation and transfer rates are examined as a part of the review process. For more information on program review, see 4.A.1.

COTC departments and programs meet during autumn and spring semesters for the purpose of program evaluation and assessment. Meeting agendas address learning objectives where the program student learning outcomes are discussed for each individual course. From these meetings, the program’s master plan is developed in accordance with the Student Learning Assessment Steering Committee’s (SLASC) template in the college’s portal. The master plan is then submitted electronically to be evaluated and assessed with the help of SLASC in developing the Master Plan Evaluation and Annual Assessment Report.

All courses at COTC articulate learning outcomes and skills required to meet these outcomes. If a course is part of the TAG or the OTM, the college employs the learning outcomes established by the Ohio Board or Regents on the Higher Ed Ohio website. A two-part syllabus further defines student learning outcomes. The class syllabus details instructional and assessment strategies. Faculty members can alter it to reflect their individual approach to addressing the learning outcomes. The standardized course syllabus defines learning outcomes and corollary performance.
objectives. It ensures curriculum integrity, and it cannot be altered without consent from the Curriculum Committee. Syllabi are distributed to students on the first day of class to clarify faculty expectations and curricular requirements.

The SLASC assesses courses based on student achievement of established program learning outcomes. As part of the process, faculty set benchmarks for the desired percentage of students who meet the learning outcome. A specific assignment is employed to determine whether students are meeting the outcome. The specific guidelines for assessing courses are presented on the SLASC organization page in the portal.

The college employs a continuous improvement system that consists of curriculum development, assessment planning, and outcome analysis linked to a revision and refinement state to complete the cycle. The SLASC and the college have created an integrated, college-wide approach to learning outcome data collection and assessment activities. The assessment process involves a continuous practice of assessing, reviewing and implementing. The college maintains a three-year assessment process, during which a program develops and reviews its master plan and annual reports and implements changes accordingly. This review work entails the active participation of the SLASC. The SLASC reviews a program’s master plan, which indicates a number of student learning outcomes that will be the focus of the program in the coming three years. A program focuses on analyzing some of these learning outcomes in a given year and then reports its findings in its annual report, which summarizes the assessment data collected and proposes relevant follow-up action. The annual report is reviewed by the SLASC, which recommends teaching- and learning-related changes in reporting assessment findings. Next, the program implements these and/or other changes, which are then analyzed in a subsequent annual report. In the meantime, the program focuses on several new learning outcomes to analyze.

All assessment-related activities are coordinated by the SLASC. The SLASC oversees both course- and program-level assessments, and ensures that the proper data are collected and analyzed. In doing so, it ensures that these analyses are applied to the development of continuous improvement plans college-wide. To facilitate the process, the SLASC has developed and implemented a variety of assessment tools and resources. The SLASC has continued to refine the assessment process and recently adopted a new process for 2014, which includes all the previous elements, but focuses on better documentation and mapping of outcomes, progress and follow-up.

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

Assessment of learning outcomes at COTC is evaluated through the SLASC which addresses both curricular and co-curricular learning outcomes at the program and course level. Assessment occurs on a three-year assessment cycle allowing for every course to be assessed once in a three-year term. Annual presentations are provided by program area faculty and reflect program learning outcomes as measured in the courses that compose that program. Each year, distinct learning outcomes are reviewed in such a way that each learning outcome is reviewed once in a three-year span.

Measures for program assessment are drawn from a random selection of courses and sections utilizing a variety of assessment methods and tools as designated by the program’s assessment master plan. Within programs, outcomes are assessed using a variety of methods such as the use of rubrics, and items embedded into course examinations. In many of the technical programs, assessment may be provided by external accreditation agencies and national examinations specialized for content.

COTC uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning. The May 2008
HLC Site Visit Report recognized that the college had been augmenting its assessment efforts but, at the time of the visit, had not had time to “close the loop” regarding assessment. HLC therefore required a Progress Report demonstrating that the college will have established an assessment process that would yield meaningful, student-learning-centered results. Indeed, the college has been engaged in just such an assessment process and in February 2011, submitted the required Progress Report indicating the college’s success in this area. HLC accepted the Progress Report and approved it in March 2011.

The college has continued its progress in assessing student learning. The college routinely collects and analyzes student learning assessment data in order to help faculty better understand how and why they need to implement necessary changes in curriculum and instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. The SLASC reviews student assessment data and the processes of COTC departments and programs. All assessment data is stored in a common folder on the college’s portal. This historical assessment data is used to “close the loop” on the assessment process by capturing changes proposed in the previous assessment cycle for comparison with future assessment reviews. In addition to all full-time faculty, the academic deans and directors, the vice president for academic affairs, and the director of institutional research and effectiveness have access to the assessment forms and data on the team site. The SLASC is working on developing a process for action items based on the committee's recommendations to presenters. Minutes of the SLASC meetings are posted on the portal. The following examples are offered to demonstrate how the college has used assessment data to improve student learning:

- The program review for developmental math and English demonstrated that students were struggling in these areas. The faculty reviewers determined that these problems were a result of both structural issues, such as course sequencing and the number of required courses, and course content curriculum issues. In response to the assessment data, developmental math and English faculty designed new courses (i.e., MATH-080, GENR-090, GENR-091) with the goal of restricting the number of courses that students must take to enter credit-level courses and ensuring that students learn required concepts within multiple contexts (i.e. contextualized learning). The new courses were piloted in autumn 2013. Both mathematics and English showed a pass rate increase of 10-20 percent. The new courses were placed into the curriculum in summer 2014. Developmental education faculty will continue to examine pass rates for these courses and make appropriate changes to courses to improve student learning.
- The Mathematics department has created a handbook to establish departmental standards regarding instructional methods. This handbook is also used to share the departmental learning outcomes and assessment tools with all full- and part-time faculty.
- Several COTC programs evaluate student learning outcomes through pass rates on nationally-normed examinations. These pass rates are also employed in the process of improving student learning. For example, the Nursing program continuously assesses student progress and learning outcomes. Standardized assessments are used throughout the program, and graduates take a national licensure examination upon program completion. Results from both the standardized assessments and the national licensure exam are analyzed and shared with the faculty as a whole. Actions are then taken to address identified gaps or areas for further development. For example, students take a proctored assessment at the end of the Nursing Fundamentals course. Students who score below expected thresholds are diverted into an at-risk intervention pathway. Policies regarding student learning assessment and the remediation statement are located in the ADN Handbook.
- Given the low rates of successful completion by students who are enrolled in online pre-college courses both nationally and at COTC and consistent with the recommendations from the Ohio Association of Community Colleges in their 2013 report from the Student Success Task Force...
on Developmental Education, the college has discontinued offering pre-college courses in an online format. Only face-to-face sections are provided.

- In the Human Services program course HSV-120 Direct Practice Skills, one of the stated learning outcomes is to apply interpersonal skills in helping relationships, including crisis intervention and group dynamics. Student performance is assessed by having students complete a final videotaped project where they demonstrate interviewing and interpersonal skills. A grading rubric was designed as an assessment tool, and a new, more detailed assessment tool was designed and implemented. The results of overall student performance based on this rubric were compared to the student performance results from the previous, less detailed assessment tool. This analysis showed an improvement in student performance on this final project. The majority of students increased performance by one letter grade. Therefore, the new assessment tool proved helpful in assisting students to achieve this learning objective. The assessment tool indicates that student overall performance on this learning outcome is good. In fact, there was an improvement in overall performance when the new, more detailed grading rubric was implemented. The college will continue using the new, more detailed assessment tool. In the future, this tool will be used to analyze specific skills to determine where there may be areas that need strengthening.

- The Mathematics department found in their 2010-2011 assessment that students were having difficulty performing the correct mathematical operations relevant to various problems. To address this issue, faculty created online homework sets for all instructors to use. These homework sets included several self-quiz problems that helped students identify areas where they needed more study or guidance. In the 2011-2012 assessment, the college found that students were having difficulty with their calculators. To address this problem faculty started introducing the graphing calculator that is used in college-level classes at the developmental level. The Mathematics faculty also wrote several graphing calculator labs or group activities that all faculty now use to introduce the calculator.

- In Early Childhood Education, students were struggling with making children’s learning visible and understandable by parents. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) assessment standards 3a,b,c,d showed passing grades; however, it was noted that students were not able to achieve at a higher level of understanding that connected parents with their children’s learning. With this data, faculty provided students with concrete examples of documentation that included text that described the learning and connections to the Ohio Department of Education Early Learning Development Standards. This in-class practice resulted in exemplary evidence of student work and fulfillment of the NAEYC standards for assessing children’s understanding and providing parents with evidence of their children’s learning.

- The Department of Biological and Physical Sciences established the learning outcome “demonstrate how scientific literature is retrieved and synthesized” to ensure our students developed this important science process skill. After reviewing assessment data, it was determined that students could efficiently retrieve scientific articles; however, they struggled with the synthesis of the information from the scientific articles. Several changes were incorporated to improve students learning in regards to this learning outcome. First, more detailed instruction on paraphrasing is included in Moodle to assist students with information synthesis. Secondly, a practice assignment was created to provide students with direct feedback before they complete the grade assignment. Finally, the librarians are asked to come into the face-to-face classes to review how to synthesize information from peer-reviewed sources.

The college’s processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members. COTC faculty follow proper procedures for approval of course descriptions and course learning outcomes as
outlined by the COTC Curriculum Committee, and by the Ohio Board of Regents as TAGs, C-TAGs and OTMs, where applicable. Faculty members meet with their departmental and divisional meetings during autumn and spring semesters for the purpose of program evaluation and assessment. Meeting agendas cover teaching and learning objectives and student learning outcomes are discussed for each individual course. From these series of meetings, the faculty, deans and directors revise and update the program master plan where student learning outcomes are the central theme. The program master plan evaluation and annual assessment report are then presented and approved with recommendation by the SLASC. Any resulting recommendation by the SLASC to revise student learning outcomes or to create a new course go through COTC's Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Tech Review Panel, a subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee, meets to review the new and/or revised course or program materials one week before the general Curriculum Committee meeting. The panel members review a number of criteria including: credit hours, contact hours, the syllabus format, Blooms vocabulary, student learning outcomes, how these outcomes are assessed, delivery mode, and grade distribution for quality instruction.

The SLASC reviews student assessment data collected from departments and programs at the college. Each degree program and general education departments are responsible for developing a master plan of assessment that is then reviewed by the SLASC to provide feedback. The faculty collect assessment data on a two-three cycle and present their findings to the SLASC for review of how to improve student learning. The SLASC meets every two weeks to review assessment data. To create a culture of ongoing assessment, members of the SLASC present topics on assessment during Faculty Development Days and attend conferences and webinars.

COTC’s Center for Academic Success participated in both the General Education and the Developmental Education program reviews in order to provide perspective regarding academic support services that complement in-class instruction.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

Argument

COTC has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student population and education offerings. COTC’s strategic plan identifies enhancing student success as its number one priority. The college is committed to promoting a learning environment dedicated to student achievement by developing and implementing a recruitment, enrollment and retention plan that grows enrollment and fosters successful student completion, job placement or further education; provides educational pathways for under-prepared students; and provides a comprehensive array of effective student and academic support services.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the plan, the college has identified a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including several in the areas of persistence and completion. In the 2008-2013 strategic plan, "retention" was defined as a measure of persistence at COTC that is separated by full- and part-time status and based upon first-time degree and/or certificate-seeking students from the previous autumn who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current autumn. In connection with the plan launched in 2014, this metric has been redefined to include all students who are new to the college regardless of prior postsecondary education experiences. The new indicator is called "two-year cohort outcomes". "Graduation rate" is the number of full-time, first-time degree- and/or certificate-seeking students completing their program within 150 percent of normal time to completion, and "completions" is the total degrees and certificates awarded. During the five-year life of the plan, a baseline and a target are identified for each of the KPIs and progress is assessed annually. Under the current plan, the college is striving to improve its outcomes rate by 4 percent and its graduation rate by 6 percent. With respect to completions, the college is targeting 67 additional degree completions each year, a 13 percent increase. These key metrics become even more critical in the future as the state of Ohio transitions to a new outcome-based funding formula. By design, the improvement of these measures will directly correlate to additional revenue for the institution and will further heighten COTC’s focus on student success.
The college collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs using processes and methodologies that reflect good practice. Multiple avenues are used to obtain student data for retention and completion rates, and a diverse group of faculty and administrators analyze the information:

- **IPEDS** data is used to track college-wide retention, persistence and graduation rates for full-time, first-time students and completion for all enrolled students. This data is used as part of the annual KPIs for the college-wide strategic plan which is analyzed by college leadership and the Board of Trustees.

- Since the majority of the COTC student population does not fall into the full-time, first-time student category used by IPEDS, the college uses additional methods to analyze retention, persistence and completion rates. Beginning in 2014, COTC started using a measure which includes essentially all students. The new **two-year cohort outcome measure** is the percentage of students entering a specific term who fall into one of these mutually-exclusive groups: earned a credential by the end of their second year; transferred out before earning a credential prior to the end of their first year; or were still enrolled the second year divided by the total of students entering that particular term.

- The college participates in the **Community College Survey of Student Engagement** (CCSSE). The data gathered is compared against the five national benchmarks, which are Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, Academic Challenge, Student-Faculty Interaction and Support for Learners. Additionally, COTC compares the results to other small colleges, Ohio two-year colleges and a group of nine aspirational peers.

- COTC participates in the **National Community College Benchmark Project** (NCCBP) and has collected four years of data. The college utilized four years of NCCBP information about which institutions were achieving the most recognition for best practices to define a group of **aspirational peers** to compare IPEDs and CCSSE data.

- Specific requirements for collecting and analyzing retention, persistence and completion data are embedded in the college’s academic program review process. Data is provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness. Faculty analyze data, which includes factors such as cost of program and equipment to determine how improvements can be made to increase completion rates. Program reviews are presented to executive leadership to allow for comment and recommendations. The following reports are currently available for consideration: **Accounting Technology (2010)**, **Advertising Technology (2014)**, **Business Management Technology (2009)** pp. 1-26, pp. 27-61, pp. 62-82, pp. 83-104, pp. 105-137, pp. 138-182, pp. 183-231, pp. 232-257, **Culinary Science (2012)**, **Diagnostic Medical Sonography Technology (2012)**, **Digital Media Design Technology (2010)**, **Early Childhood Education NAEYC Self-study (2010)**, **Fire Science Technology (2014)**, **General Education (2011)**, **Human Services Technology (2014)** and **Human Services attachment file (2014)**, **Associate-degree Nursing Technology pre-Ohio Board of Nursing visit survey (2011)**, **Radiographic Science Technology (2009)**, and **Surgical Technology (2010)**.

Furthermore, programs that are specifically accredited by an external accrediting agency, such as Nursing, DMS and EMS, require their own set of retention and completion standards. For example, the Nursing program collects and analyzes multiple data sets, including but not limited to program completion data by program and by campus, completion within 150 percent of program length, and performance on national licensure examinations. Thresholds for licensure pass rates are set by the Ohio Board of Nursing and the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). Reports are submitted to regulatory and accrediting bodies on an annual basis.

The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data. The college is flexible and strategic with its
retention plans based upon the reports and data that are analyzed. Furthermore, student retention and persistence strategies were examined and re-evaluated in an effort to work successfully with the statewide completion plan which was submitted to OBR in 2014. Based upon student retention data, the college has a number of specific retention programs and resources in place to successfully promote and ensure student retention, persistence and completion. Many of these efforts are coordinated through the college’s Gateway.

Earlier this year, the state of Ohio mandated that each Ohio institution of higher education prepare an institution-specific strategic completion plan designed to increase the number of degrees and certificates awarded to students. In preparing the plan, appropriate student data was studied and analyzed by a team of academic and Gateway administrators who developed multiple strategies and initiatives designed to improve retention, persistence and completion. For example, the new student orientation program is currently being evaluated and redesigned with a focus on retention. Using the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the college is measuring students’ perception of the college’s support for their learning in order to determine what changes and improvements may be necessary. The standardized benchmark for Support for Learning was 48.8 in 2011 and increased to 49.7 in 2014. One of the biggest effects on the standardized benchmark was the lack of utilization of career counseling services. CCSSE Data for 2014 measuring use, satisfaction and importance of career counseling services revealed that only 81 of the 547 (15%) of respondents who provided a response to all three survey items related to career counseling utilized the services often or sometimes. Of the 81 students who used the services often or sometimes, 90.1% were satisfied with the services. Eighty percent (439) of the 547 respondents listed career services as being somewhat or very important but only 18% of these 439 students indicated they use the services often or sometimes. This lack of use career counseling services and the reported level of importance resulted in inclusion of this issue as an improvement objective in the completion plan. The resultant plan is a systematic improvement plan for institution-wide policy and practice that reaches the departmental and classroom levels for direct impact on student persistence and completion. The plan was approved by the board of trustees during their June 2014 meeting and was submitted to the chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents in June. The plan is consistent with the college’s mission and strategic priorities, includes measurable student completion goals and aligns with the state’s workforce development priorities.

Information collected on student retention is used by Gateway staff to compile weekly reports on student enrollment per term. Using this information, Gateway staff adjust their retention strategies to recruit and encourage returning students to enroll and persist to the following term. One example is COTC’s Gateway call center initiative. The center receives reports of students earmarked at various potential points within their college career. These reports guide each week’s retention call center efforts. Additionally, advisors will use these reports to specifically identify and target students who are close to graduating in an effort to ensure they persist to degree completion. The information gathered on student retention is used by several committees to specifically address student retention and persistence. The Retention Committee specifically addresses student retention and ways to improve retention college-wide. Specific program advisory committees address student concerns and issues that may hinder a student from persisting in attaining their degree.

Student success data is also considered in making curricular changes. For example, while reviewing data in 2012, faculty found that a large percentage of students were unsuccessful in the developmental education math sequence (MATH-040, MATH-050, MATH-060 and MATH-070) which were offered as term courses. As a result, the courses were revised to consolidate MATH-050, MATH-060 and MATH-070 into one new developmental math course, renamed MATH-080 Foundations of College Mathematics, which runs the entire semester. The data from the MATH-080 pilot program has suggested that the change in MATH-080 will help students requiring remedial math to be
successful and persist at the college.

Another resource the college has implemented to help students persist to degree completion is to offer independent studies. The Office of Academic Affairs offers independent course studies to students that need a course to complete degree requirement. The independent study gives students the flexibility to complete their degree and is offered on a case-by-case basis.

Retention Alert software was purchased and implemented by the college specifically to address college-wide concern about retention. Faculty and staff use Retention Alert software program to identify students early in the term who are in need of advising intervention and/or student support services. The Retention Alert program gives advisors an advantage when advising and working with students because it collects and compiles student data in one centralized file per student.

Retention programs and resources have been implemented and are offered throughout the college to address specific concerns with student retention and persistence. The Center for Academic Success works with students who require additional academic support. It offers assistance in math and writing to students who require it, in addition to offering a Nursing Student Success lab. The Nursing Student Success (NSS) program identifies students early in the Nursing program who may be at risk. Students take part in individualized assessment and intervention depending on their needs. Students may meet individually with their course faculty or their Nursing advisor. If indicated, referrals are made to Nursing faculty who do further assessment and link the student to resources such as the learning skills specialist, counseling services or the Math Lab. Additionally, the college offers free tutoring services to students who require academic assistance in areas aside from math, writing and nursing curricula.

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4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Summary

COTC has a history of demonstrating responsibility for the quality of its educational programs. Recently the college streamlined its program review process to further analyze program strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities and ensure program goals align with its strategic plan. It also established a review schedule for all programs through 2024.

COTC has defined policies on the evaluation and transcription of all transfer credit, non-traditional credit and other forms of credit for prior learning. Many programs are nationally accredited, and the college is in the process of earning accreditation for several others. To measure the success of its graduates, the college tracks job placement and evaluates whether alumni are employed full-time or part-time and in a field that directly or somewhat directly relates to their COTC education.

The college clearly defines student learning outcomes for each program of study and individual course, and assessment of these learning outcomes is accomplished through ongoing program reviews. The Student Learning Assessment Steering Committee (SLASC) and the college have created an integrated, college-wide approach to learning outcome data collection and assessment processes which includes a three-year review cycle. Both curricular and co-curricular learning outcomes are evaluated at the program and course level. Information gained through assessment is used to continually improve student learning.

Student success is the college’s number one priority as demonstrated by the development and implementation of a recruitment, enrollment and retention plan that grows enrollment and fosters successful student completion. Based upon student retention data, the college has a number of specific retention programs and resources in place to effectively promote and ensure student retention, persistence, and completion.

Sources

There are no sources.
5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

Argument

IRE.Goal Level KPIs as of 14SP.2014Central Ohio Technical College is committed to its core mission of providing technical education and training. By design, its budgetary and planning processes ensure that resources are allocated to maintain and strengthen its educational programs and enhance student learning. The college has sufficient personnel, physical resources, and technological infrastructure to support its operation and offer high quality programs.

Resources and infrastructure

COTC operates four campuses within its legal service district that includes Licking, Knox, and Coshocton counties within central Ohio. Geographically, Licking County is the second largest county in Ohio and is directly east of Franklin County, home of Columbus, the state capital. COTC shares its main and largest campus in Newark, Ohio with The Ohio State University at Newark. In addition to sharing a 175-acre campus, the two institutions have a strong partnership whereby they share all buildings and general purpose classrooms, over 100 staff employees, operating expenses and a number of capital equipment investments. While the governance, mission, curriculum, and faculty of each institution remain autonomous, an annual cost-sharing agreement designates shared costs for select personnel, facilities, operating expenditures, and capital equipment investments. Both institutions maintain separate operating budgets which in FY2014 included over $11.8 million of shared expenses. Cost-shared departments provide services to both institutions; shared departments include building and grounds, athletic programs, technology services, business and finance, the library, human resources, purchasing and auxiliary services, student life, student support services, financial aid, development and marketing and public relations. The cost-share agreement is updated annually and is designed to equitably allocate expenditures to each institution and protect the
institutions in times of shifting enrollments.

Additionally, the sharing relationship significantly increases the range of facilities and programs that the community and COTC students, faculty and staff can access and use. For example, campus residence halls are an unusual technical college amenity and are a direct result of the cost-shared arrangement. The Newark campus residence halls consist of 180 beds, and units are available to eligible COTC students. As a further demonstration of the depth of the partnership, all COTC faculty and staff have access to The Ohio State University’s medical and health benefits.

The partnership between the two institutions not only produces operational efficiencies but also is very favorably viewed by community members and governing bodies, resulting in stronger community support. For example, the college’s recent Next Generation Challenge scholarship campaign resulted in $20.9 million dollars raised to provide endowments yielding annual scholarship dollars directly for students. Of this $20.9 million, $10.1 million is dedicated for COTC-specific scholarships. Projected annual interest income from the growth of these scholarships will yield over $500,000 in scholarship offerings every year once all pledge payments are received. The Office of Financial Aid administers these scholarship funds and has a process to ensure that all available scholarship dollars in a given year are awarded and leveraged with other student aid to maximize the use of all types of financial aid across the college.

The college operates three extended campuses: one in Knox County, one in Coshocton County and one in the town of Pataskala. COTC values its distinct culture, historic strengths, and reputation for academic excellence at all three of its extended campuses. Curricula include college-wide general education and program-specific courses, allowing the opportunity for students to earn degrees and certificates from the college. Routine meetings, such as the executive leadership team, academic leadership team and enrollment issues team ensure extended campus staff and faculty are able to connect, collaborate and interact with Newark campus counterparts. Financial reporting that reflects revenues and expenses is maintained to ensure the appropriate allocation of resources to these campuses.

Within academic programs, some individual courses are taught in off-campus locations, including area high schools as part of the college's dual enrollment offerings. Courses include field experience and clinical training for allied health programs, Human Services, Culinary Science and Early Childhood Education. All of these off-campus courses and experiences are taught or supervised by COTC faculty who otherwise teach on-campus courses (see 3.A. for more information).

Several external financial indicators provide compelling evidence that COTC has a strong resource base. As a state college, COTC is subject to fiscal watch rules as originally passed by and commonly known as Senate Bill 6 ratios. Three ratios are measured and a weighted composite ratio is calculated. The first ratio is the Viability ratio which is a measure of the liquidity of the college. The second is the Primary Reserve ratio which determines whether the level of reserves in an institution is sufficient. Lastly the Net Income ratio measures the annual change in net assets to assess the operating results of the institution. In FY13, the college achieved the highest score possible on both the Viability ratio and the Net Income ratio, COTC received the next to highest score on the Primary Reserve ratio narrowly missing the highest score. The ultimate composite score was a 4.5 on a 5.0 score ranking COTC in the top 15 percent of all public colleges and universities in the state of Ohio. The college has consistently scored above 3.5 over the last decade. The college currently has no debt which has allowed executive leadership and administration to focus resources on the critical needs of the college primarily funding its academic programs and student support services.

COTC’s revenue stream is primarily made up of two sources: 1) tuition and fees, and 2) state support.
Tuition and fees has been the larger component (55.4 percent in FY15) over at least the last decade as the state of Ohio became challenged to keep funding levels consistent with the level of enrollment growth. COTC’s annual tuition rate for FY15 is $4,296 and benchmarks very well to the other two year colleges in Ohio that do not have local levies. Annual tuition increases are determined each year by the Board of Trustees. The board takes into consideration its desire to keep tuition as low as possible for students, the governing legislation of the state which in most years applies caps to increases, and institutional needs. A new state funding formula was introduced and fully implemented in planning for FY15. COTC fared well under the new system which rewards outcomes such as course completions, degrees attained and various metrics linked to student success. This new funding along with the efficient operation of the college allowed the COTC to freeze tuition and fees for FY15. This demonstrates the college's continued concern for student access and student loan indebtedness.

The college demonstrated its ongoing commitment to financial health and stability in its performance against annual budget projections. Over the last decade, COTC has consistently performed well to budget and in times during revenue shortfalls. In the autumn of 2012 during a state-wide trend of decreased enrollment, swift actions were taken to rectify and balance the budget. This was further evidenced by the college’s steady and dramatic growth in net assets. These assets more than doubled in the last decade from close to $20 million in FY04 to over $45 million in FY13. A subset of this metric, the college’s unrestricted fund balance or "rainy-day fund" went from just over $2 million in FY04 to its present level of $9 million in FY13. The college’s extended campuses are budgeted separately and each campus’ budget is monitored to maintain an acceptable level of financial performance each year.

COTC is committed to supporting and continuously improving its educational programs. The college’s low student-faculty ratio (16:1), its high percentage of full-time faculty with master’s or higher degrees (84.7 percent), and its low average class size (81 percent of Autumn 2013 classes had 24 or fewer students), point to the college’s support of its strong commitment to foster academic excellence. In autumn 2013, the college had 233 full-time employees involved in teaching, learning facilitation, and support services for approximately 3,707 full- and part-time students. This included 59 full-time faculty, 84 full-time administrative/professional staff (48 cost-shared and 36 non-cost-shared employees) and 80 full-time support staff (62 cost-shared and 18 non cost-shared). Due to the effectiveness of the cost-share agreement with Ohio State Newark, more than 100 staff in central administrative and facilities positions are shared by the two institutions. This approach reduces duplicative staffing, improves efficiencies and attracts highly skilled individuals. In addition, approximately 217 part-time faculty members augmented the teaching ranks.

The college is committed to providing the highest quality facilities and physical environment that support and promote its academic programs. One of the more historically significant COTC planning documents is the 2012 Newark Campus Framework Plan. The plan is the result of a 12-month comprehensive and collaborative effort between COTC and Ohio State that guides decision making and physical change on the campus over the next 50 years. The college’s physical property includes approximately 600,000 square feet of building space and over 200 acres of grounds at the four campus locations.

The college has undertaken several significant capital projects since the last accreditation visit in 2008. Facility renovations and new building projects reflect the college’s mission-critical support of both its curricular and co-curricular programs. Renovated and new spaces at the Knox and Pataskala campuses, Hopewell Hall renovations (new science laboratories and student services), Founders Hall renovations (new classrooms), and remodeling of the North Classroom building (Digital Media Design and Early Childhood Education programs) support the academic mission of the college. The John L.
and Christine Warner Library and Student Center, as well as campus-wide signage and way-finding improvements further demonstrate the college’s commitment to providing a student-centered environment.

Looking towards the future, the college is currently planning two new campus buildings, both to be located on the Newark campus: a science and technology building, is a proposed 60,000 square foot facility to house world-class STEM-based academic programs, and a facilities operations building, a proposed 15,000 square foot facility to house current maintenance and grounds operations as well as consolidated campus shipping/receiving and warehousing operations. Additionally, renovations are being planned to upgrade recreational and wellness facilities in Adena Hall. This project will also include a number of building maintenance and operational improvements. This project was successfully requested and funded with state of Ohio capital dollars in the current state capital budget. All three projects will be shared with Ohio State Newark.

Larger projects included in the Framework Plan, as well as regular maintenance projects ensure that campus facilities continue to optimally serve students, faculty and staff. A comprehensive review of the college’s existing facilities and infrastructure is part of the annual budget process. The submission of new action plans related to capital improvements aligns directly with the college’s strategic initiatives.

The Information Technology Services (ITS) department is a cost-shared unit that supports a single homogenous network for both COTC and Ohio State Newark. This approach provides a wider breadth of technical services for both institutions than could be obtained if each institution maintained separate information technology infrastructures. Related benefits leveraged from this sharing relationship include:

- The ability to fiscally support a three-year computer refresh program for all classrooms and student-facing areas.
- A robust technical infrastructure using leading edge technical solutions for our students and employees. Examples include the use of thin client technologies, a group collaborative intranet for faculty, staff and students, enhanced remote access capabilities and two robust campus-wide wireless systems for secured network use, including a separate unsecured personal use system.
- An enhanced support infrastructure for online eLearning and video conferencing distance education classrooms.
- Video editing and production services for classroom lecture capture needs and other technology tools that enhance the classroom experience for students.
- Enhanced support for tablet and mobile devices.

These partnership also allows for a larger ITS organizational structure that is cost-effective for both institutions. Personnel resources are available to support expanding academic operations while providing high levels of customer service support. This includes the resources needed to expand online course offerings and implement other leading-edge technology tools in COTC’s classroom environment. The college is able to leverage hardware and software savings by taking advantage of large scale vendor contracts held by Ohio State, thereby reducing costs. Other enterprise-wide information technology application systems and best practices are made available to COTC that normally would be beyond its means. An example of one best practice that was recently completed for COTC includes the development of an Information Security Risk Strategic Plan. The purpose of this document is to outline the risk management approach and multi-year strategy that will be used by the ITS Department. The period covered by the plan is FY15-17. This plan will be used to prioritize efforts, develop a three year budget plan, and manage information security risk in the thirty risk areas that have been identified as part of the university’s Information Risk Management Framework. The
application of these types of practices leads to a very strong information technology resource base that meets the needs of COTC students in a secure reliable manner, and provides them with the highest quality of technical education in their chosen fields of study.

The use of technology to enhance student learning and administrative support areas is a very high priority for the institution. All information technology initiatives are required to support the institution’s defined mission and vision. The college prides itself in meeting its mission by ensuring that the software applications used as part of all curricula are aligned with the types of tools that students will be expected to use in the work place. Two noteworthy projects that will directly impact student success and have been approved for the FY15 budget year are the implementation of Recruiter and the transition to Microsoft Lync. Recruiter is a Student Information System (SIS) module that will greatly enhance the online application and admissions process for students. In July 2014 the college started a two-year transition to the Microsoft Lync unified communication system so that enhanced voice, video and IM/text messaging will be available to all employees, thereby enhancing communications with students and the business and academic areas that provide services.

The same technology systems and tools used at the Newark campus are available at all extended locations. Multiple computer labs and technology enhanced flex classrooms are available to all students at these locations. Remote troubleshooting of computer systems is also available, and dedicated student employees who work for the ITS department are onsite to provide timely support when needed. This leads to high availability of all information technology systems and quick turnaround times when problems arise.

Each extended campus has a dedicated video conferencing room so that students can remotely attend classes that may only be offered at Newark. This allows students to take classes they need for degree completion in a timely manner regardless of location.

The ITS department has also expanded support for dual enrollment faculty and students and provides them with access to all technology learning systems that are used on campus. Faculty have the ability to use these tools to enhance the learning environment for classes that are taught in the high schools. This leads to consistent use and presentation of curriculum content for this important segment of the college's student body.

Resource allocation process ensures support of educational purposes.

As evidenced by the current 49 percent budget allocation for instruction and academic support, the college ensures that its resource allocation process makes its educational purpose a priority. Even when experiencing cost pressures in other areas such as technology, facilities and student services, COTC ensures that sufficient resources are allocated to meet its core mission of providing quality technical educational programming.

Realistic goals in light of organization, resources, and opportunities

COTC faculty and staff believe that the stated goals and priorities are realistic and appropriate for the college. Over 90 percent of COTC’s employees believe that the college’s goals and objectives are consistent with its mission and values.

The college’s planning documents outline four priorities for the institution: enhancing student success; providing job-focused, career-driven academic programming; strengthening community connections; and achieving performance excellence. These priorities emerged from an extensive process that engaged multiple constituent groups and considered a wealth of information on the
environmental factors influencing or impacting the college. All faculty, staff, board members, students, alumni and advisory committee members were invited to participate in the constituent survey that asked, “How can COTC better serve the communities in our area?” and “What should COTC’s primary focus over the next five years?” Additionally, the college’s Board of Trustees participated in a SWOT analysis exercise. All of this information was compiled with the other information collected during the strategic plan development process to identify the opportunities and priorities for the college over the next five-year period.

A more detailed description of work on the current strategic plan is included in Core Component 5.C. As a component of its planning documents, the college has identified a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to use in measuring progress towards achieving the priorities and goals outlined in the plan. A target has been set for each key metric, with consideration given to current standing, benchmark data of like institutions, aspirational peers and areas of growth/opportunity. Progress on these metrics is monitored and reported annually to the Board of Trustees.

**Staff Qualifications and Training**

Filling a regular open position generally involves the crucible of a competitive open search, assuring that the best-suited candidate can be selected. Job classification specifications and position descriptions state the minimum and preferred education and experience requirements. Education, experience and other qualifications drive recruitment and selection. Position descriptions also may include maintaining certifications or involvement in professional or academic organizations among job duties (e.g., Faculty contract, Article IX,D.3.c & 4.e). Additionally, all faculty are hired in accordance with the Higher Learning Commission’s Guidance on Determining Qualified Faculty. Currently, 84.7 percent of the full-time faculty hold doctorate or master’s degrees.

To ensure qualified applicant pools and to better manage and streamline the recruitment process of all full-time, part-time, and temporary positions, COTC implemented the PeopleAdmin online recruitment system, including applicant tracking and position description modules in November 2009. Based on applicant responses of qualifying questions specific to the position description qualifications, the online recruitment system provides easy online access to all advertised and posted positions.

The Hiring Guide is a tool provided to assist supervisors and search committees in the selection of the most qualified applicants. Based on a fair and consistent search process, the Hiring Guide promotes diversity and equal opportunity and outlines the 13-step hiring process beginning with the initial advertising requisition and initiating the search to extending the offer and conducting the required background check and drug screening. Staff from the Office of Human Resources (HR) provide orientation and training to search committee members who have not served on a committee within the past year. Additional tools and resources applicable to various steps of the Hiring Guide are available online to assist the supervisor/selection committee in the hiring selection process.

The college's Recruitment and Selection Policy outlines departmental onboarding plans, which includes connecting the new hire with resources, their department's mission, and other staff and faculty to help ensure a successful transition into their new role. Upon hire, HR staff provide new hire and benefits orientation for all regular benefits-eligible new hires and provides a “New Hire Orientation Checklist for Supervisors” to the hiring supervisor to help ensure appropriate onboarding for the new employee.

Once hired, professional development is a key component of faculty and staff evaluations. The college is committed to developing faculty and staff knowledge and talent by providing growth
opportunities through professional development activities. Over the past three fiscal years, COTC has budgeted an average of $210,671 to support and encourage professional development. Within the same period, COTC has expended an average of $144,554 per year. Declining balance p-cards are available to faculty and staff to ease the burden of fronting travel cost for the employee. COTC is also committed to supporting membership of outside organizations that help with professional development and building professional relationships by spending an average of $97,639 per year on employees' membership dues. Generous employee fee reimbursement is available to eligible faculty and staff for continuing formal education at regionally accredited institutions. Accountability for continuing professional development is integrated into job responsibilities and performance management, and is rewarded through compensation, encouraging further professional development.

Workshops and seminars are typically offered on a monthly basis. They are designed to improve health and wellness awareness, develop proficiencies to enhance job performance and acquire competencies that apply to employees’ professional and personal well-being. The professional development calendar, developed and sponsored by HR, includes online Sexual Harassment training; a collaborative diversity series sponsored by HR, the Office of Student Life and the Diversity committee; educational book discussions; women-focused programming including leadership training and sponsorships to women’s conferences; customer service and dealing with conflict in the workplace. To promote a culture that encourages health awareness and management, the calendar also includes topics such as maintaining a healthy heart, the benefits of exercise, mindful eating and dealing with stress.

By policy, compensation principles include “attracting & retaining quality staff” and “encouraging the development of expertise.” Starting salaries for staff take into consideration the individual's credentials and experience in comparison to the relevant competitive market. Faculty starting salaries are based on highest degree level, relevant certifications and experience. Additional increases are awarded for attaining first master’s and doctoral degrees. Initial faculty rank and future promotions are based on advanced education and experience, among other factors. Annually, market-based analyses are conducted for faculty and staff compensation, ensuring appropriate competitiveness both for selecting and retaining the most qualified and trained employees. This process also assists the college in closing the gap when compensation is less competitive. Salary increases are distributed in accordance with guidance provided annually by the Office of Human Resources. Staff increases are awarded based on merit—including performance, internal and external equity, and the impact of the position on the mission of the department or college. Faculty salary increases are distributed based on a rank- and market-based matrix, incorporating performance, training and qualifications through established policy and procedures.

**Budgeting and Monitoring Expense**

COTC’s financial history reflects a forward-looking commitment to educational quality. Annually, the college adopts and publishes a Current Funds Budget that delineates financial priorities and details the financial plan for the coming fiscal year. The budget process requires the development of assumptions and forecasts related to revenue and expense projections. These become the benchmark for assessing financial progress.

Budget development is a collaborative effort, requiring Unit Budget Managers (UBMs) in each department to identify needs and define requests for the next year. Needs are assessed and prioritized in direct relation to the institution’s vision, mission and priorities.

The college has internal financial controls in place to monitor and review all expenditures through the purchasing and accounting departments for budgetary adherence as well as policy compliance. The
Budget Office monitors departmental budgets during the year, tracking and monitoring any variances. The same controls are in place for all of the college's extended campuses in regards to course enrollments, budgetary monitoring and internal controls. Interim financial reports are reviewed with the board three times per year to track the revenues and expenses to budget overall for the institution. The college undergoes an annual independent audit and has a history of clean opinions. As a part of this engagement, auditors also test internal controls. In the FY13 audit, no compliance issues were cited and no improvements were noted, evidencing strong internal controls.

The college has also implemented controls within its financial management system to monitor expenditures on a day-to-day basis by requiring funds availability verification before a requisition can be submitted. This step ensures that UBMs have funds available within their department's budgets for the expenditure prior to a request being submitted. Budget Office personnel are contacted and discussions are held should a department need additional funding for a purchase request to be processed. Additionally, the Budget Office prepares and reviews with the vice president of business and finance several monitoring reports to assist in projecting the college’s financial position at the end of the fiscal year.

An annual audit of the institution is performed by an independent audit firm. This firm makes a report of its findings to the Board of Trustees and the published report is maintained in the library for public inspection.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

Argument

COTC's governance and administrative structures foster effective leadership and collaboration that enable the college to fulfill its mission.

**COTC's policies and procedures for governance of the college lay out the ways that its internal constituencies participate in governance.** As the legal governing authority, COTC’s Board of Trustees adheres to rules established by and in compliance with Ohio Revised Code 111.15. The board Rules state the board's role in governance, describing the duties, powers, and responsibilities of the board and of the president as it manages and directs the business and affairs of the college. For instance, the Rules set the requirements for regular and special meetings and define the roles of Board officers and board committees. The president is responsible for the entire administration of the college, for providing leadership in promoting the aims and objectives of the college, and for enforcing the rules and regulations of the Board of Trustees.

In 2010, the college undertook a year-long project to ensure that all COTC board rules were current and that a system was in place to ensure that systematic review, update and filing occur in the future. The scope of the project included updating, repealing and filing all official college rules. The project resulted in a clear definition of board rules, including the distinction between rules and procedures and an outline of categorical subgroups for the rules (i.e. general administration, student, curriculum and instruction, etc.), a standardized template/format for COTC rules, updated current filings with the Legislative Service Commission and establishment of a system to ensure rules are updated and maintained on a regular five-year cycle and placed on a website housing all board rules.

Subsequent to the rules project, the college initiated a policy initiative in 2011 to establish a collaborative, transparent and efficient policy system to improve organizational trust and accountability. This initiative resulted in the development of a systematic and documented policy approval and review process, the designation of policy owners and an institutional policy process coordinator, and the development of a number of resources such as the policy writing guide, flowchart and policy template. The policy approval process strives to offer accessible, formally approved, well-articulated and understandable policies and procedures in a consistent, official format. This process outlines the policy owner's responsibility to ensure the appropriate parties are involved for input and decisions. Administration, staff, faculty, students, committees, boards, clubs and councils are involved in policy and procedure input and decisions that may affect their operations and responsibilities to
their constituents within the college. All policies are tracked and maintained in the Office of the
President and published on the college website or portal.

The duties and responsibilities of the faculty are outlined in the Agreement Between The Central Ohio
Technical College and The United Faculty/Central Ohio Technical College, AFT/OFT. The
agreement includes a section on college governance that defines the advisory role of the faculty in
both academic administration of the college and non-academic decision-making. It also defines the
vision and parameters of committee assignments.

Student Government exists to represent the student bodies of both COTC and The Ohio State
University at Newark. As defined in its mission statement and goals, it is tasked with providing an
outlet for student opinions on matters of student interest, building leadership among its members, and
enabling students to contribute to the overall objectives of the Newark campus and the welfare of the
community. It is the representative body for all students on the Newark campus and is therefore
responsible for conveying their wishes and desires to the faculty, staff and administration. Student
Government strives to ensure that the rights of students are honored by representing students on
Faculty Assemblies, Judicial Review Panels and Academic Misconduct Juries. Through the process of
passing legislation, it works toward bettering the campus in all areas of the college experience.
Student Government offers leadership opportunities to all students on campus through membership,
development, training sessions and initiatives.

The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight for the
institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary
responsibilities. The board meets on a monthly basis with an agenda designed to inform members
about college operations and the educational environment. Board members receive packets two
weeks in advance to assist them in preparation for each meeting. Agenda items cover topics such as
academic programming, financial monitoring and strategic planning. Board members are also active
with the Ohio Association of Community Colleges to stay informed of statewide communications
affecting two-year institutions.

The board’s responsibilities are outlined clearly within Ohio Revised Code 3357.09. The college
directs the president to implement the mission of the college and the strategic plan and conducts an
annual evaluation to assess progress on clearly established goals. The board has an Audit/Finance
committee to assist with its oversight of the fiscal affairs of the college. The board sets the tuition and
fees and authorizes an annual budget as recommended by the committee. The college is also subject to
the A-133 Single Audit Act, which involves a rigorous compliance audit as a part of the annual
independent audit. As a part of this process, the Audit/Finance committee meets with the auditors to
evaluate the fiscal condition of the college and the results of the audit.

Understanding the value of collaboration, COTC has effective structures for administrators,
faculty, staff, and students to contribute to setting academic requirements, policy, and
processes. These structures support a collaborative effort among the college's internal constituencies
as they work together to fulfill these key elements of COTC's mission.

The college has a well-defined organizational structure demonstrating clear lines of authority,
reporting, and formal relationships from the Board of Trustees to front-line employees. The president
is the chief executive officer of the college and reports directly to the board. The college is organized
into eight major functional units: academic affairs, business and finance; institutional planning and
human resources development; student affairs; the library, information technology services,
development, and extended campuses and gateway. Each unit is led by a senior administrator who
reports directly to the president.
Regular meetings of teams in the college’s various units support involvement. The executive leadership team, comprised of the vice presidents for academic affairs, business and finance, institutional planning and human resources development, and extended campuses and gateway, meets every two weeks to provide advice and counsel to the president. The academic leadership team, comprised of academic administration as well as department staff, meets weekly to focus on improving the student experience and student outcomes across all campuses. Leaders of the other divisions and units, such as the gateway, human resources, institutional research and effectiveness, and student life hold regular meetings of staff in their areas.

Governance structures to foster faculty involvement in setting academic requirements, policy and processes are primarily provided through Faculty Council and its offspring subcommittees, each with their own officers, responsibilities and missions. The COTC Curriculum Committee recommends approval or disapproval of new and revised courses or programs and advises the Office of Academic Affairs on meeting outcomes. The Student Learning and Assessment Committee reviews assessment of student learning within COTC departments and programs, and advises faculty on the assessment tools and processes to foster a culture of ongoing evaluation of student learning. The Library Committee assists the head librarian in ascertaining the library-related needs of faculty and students and in determining the resources and services necessary to fulfill those needs. This committee also advises and assists in the formulation of policies governing the operation of the library. The Professional Development Committee provides an ongoing assessment of faculty needs for professional growth and a mechanism for use of professional development funds in congruence with institutional goals. This committee also assists in planning the annual autumn faculty development program. The Mentoring Committee is responsible for placing first-year faculty with mentors and ensuring that mentors, new faculty and the vice president for academic affairs understand the process and responsibilities of mentors and mentees. The college also has two designated ombudspersons who serve as liaisons between students with academic grievances and faculty. The Ombudspersons advise students on appropriate COTC policies and encourage communication with the involved faculty member. They also guide students to appropriate administrators within the Office of Academic Affairs to assist in resolving issues. The officers of these committees summarize and report to Faculty Council the findings of their meetings.

Part-time faculty have the opportunity to collaborate and communicate through department meetings, email communications, and special events. They also have the opportunity to meet with non-academic departments during their autumn and spring part-time faculty professional development sessions.

Staff members have numerous opportunities to participate in collaborative planning and decision making. Every month staff members gather at a Staff Forum meeting to share information from all facets of the campus. Questions and concerns that arise during these Staff Forum meetings are directed upward to the college’s executive leadership where they are addressed before all staff members at the annual Town Hall Meeting. Staff members are also asked to anonymously complete an Employee Satisfaction Survey every other year that is designed to collect important data about the college’s culture, goals, decision-making, and work environment. The results of the survey are used by campus leadership to develop action plans for organizational improvement.

Staff members with unit budget manager (UBM) designation shape the institution’s decision making because they are responsible for developing action plan requests, which are the foundation of the development of the annual operating budget. Through their roles and responsibilities, UBMs serve as the primary conduit to connect and engage campus departments with the budgeting process as well as with the accounting and purchasing policies for the institution.
COTC faculty, staff and students participate in a wide variety of ongoing and ad hoc committees that help to define the college’s strategic direction and set policy. Participation in ongoing committees such as the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council, which works to empower faculty, staff and students to enrich their educational and working experiences, and the Strategic Planning Council, which is the decision-making body that coordinates the college’s strategic plan, affords these internal constituency groups the opportunity to affect the future culture of the college and the experiences of prospective students. Similarly, involvement in ad hoc committees such as the eLearning Work Study Group, which conducted a comprehensive assessment of the college’s Virtual Campus and offered recommendations to executive leadership for continuous improvement in an effort to ensure a standard of high quality gives faculty and staff the opportunity to directly impact the future of the college. Other examples of ad hoc committees that provide opportunities for employee involvement in policy development and implementation include the faculty-staff-academic administration team currently working to review and improve the College Credit Plus program (dual enrollment) process for the college, and the Tobacco-free Committee that was established to implement the policy to become 100 percent tobacco-free.

The Office of Student Life at COTC is a vital component of the college, providing many opportunities for students to become involved through formal groups and organizations with a focus on encouraging student learning and developing a diverse campus community. Student organizations are open to currently-enrolled students at any campus. Organizations include but are not limited to student governance, multi-cultural (such as Ebony Horizons), special interest (such as Directions Gay-Straight Alliance), and service (such as the Human Service Committee).

Students also have many opportunities to provide input at both the college and department level. They are invited to serve on academic advisory committees, attend department meetings and open forums and provide direct feedback on courses and faculty through online course evaluations. Student surveys, such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, graduate surveys and specific technology surveys are routinely conducted. Students also have the opportunity to influence academic course scheduling through the course petition process.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution’s sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Argument

COTC is committed to an integrated, strategic and quality planning process and effective planning occurs at all levels of the college. The institution adheres to a planning model that links planning at the highest levels of accountability, from the institution as a whole, at the unit/department level, and down to individual employees. The strategic plan is the overarching document that sets the clear direction for the college and is used by each department/unit and each individual employee as a guide to ensure that work is appropriately aligned with the college's stated direction and priorities. Each department/unit develops its own goals and strategic initiatives that advance institution-wide strategic direction. The college’s performance management process ensures that the work of all employees is aligned with the college’s mission and strategic priorities through the requirement of individual performance plans.

Three traditional types of planning are used at the college: strategic, annual, and master/capital. Strategic planning at COTC is a visionary process that results in major, long-range and far-reaching strategic directions or goals for the future to advance the institution's aspirations for service to students and the community. COTC employs a five-year strategic planning cycle and, in January 2014, the college released its new strategic plan, Focusing on our Purpose, 2014 – 2018. The plan provides critical focus for the institution and is the driver for resource allocation and budget decisions.

In addition to long-term strategic planning, the college engages in annual planning. The college has five steps in the annual planning cycle: environmental scanning, developing strategic thinking, strategic directions and priorities, planning and implementation, and accountability. Environmental scanning and developing strategic thinking about data and trends lead to the development of overall institution-wide strategic direction and priorities that are used to focus action planning. Action planning occurs in the planning and implementation phase. In the accountability step, data on the outcomes of implementation are used to support planning activities.

The annual planning calendar includes specific activities conducted throughout the academic year. The environmental scan and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis are conducted in the autumn. Early in the new calendar year, departments submit mid-year progress reports on their current year's action plans and review institutional priorities and objectives to ensure that they still align with fulfilling those action plans. The next action plan and decision-making cycle.
soon begins, with the budget consideration deadline for department action plan requests usually slated for mid-March. During the spring Strategic Planning Council (SPC) meeting, the council reviews the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and other metrics, and conducts other activities to evaluate the effectiveness of the college’s planning efforts. In June, departments submit their final progress reports for the prior year's action plans.

The complete process is outlined in the Strategic Planning & Budget Handbook which serves as a guide to help coordinate institution-wide strategic planning and provides a framework to align department activities with the visions, missions, values and goals of the college. It documents the processes, guidelines and responsibilities for strategic and quality planning. The handbook specifically outlines using quality improvement processes; developing linkages from strategic planning to operational planning; evaluating and improving performance of the planning process; and defining and linking the planning roles and responsibilities among college leadership, committees and individual employees.

In addition to strategic and annual planning, the college engages in long-term capital/master planning, encompassing the physical assets of the college. In 2012, COTC work alongside its partner institution, The Ohio State University, to develop a historically important document called The Newark Campus Framework Plan. This document is the result of a year-long planning effort between the two institutions and serves as the 50-year development “blueprint” for the campus. It integrates programmatic, physical and financial planning as it relates to the Newark campus’s physical environment.

Through evidence-based data collection, the result of the process was a set of principles that guide decision making, creates strategies that visualize the principles, prioritize needs, provide a physical framework to convey the vision, depict physical scenarios to move the vision forward and pose financial strategies to meet capital needs. As outlined in the plan, future development is separated into distinct strategic phases with each timeline containing specific capital improvements with financial resources being appropriately and strategically apportioned. Examples of Strategic Phase 1 mission-critical projects include the science and technology building, the facilities operations building and the renovation of Adena Hall.

In 2014, the college extended the framework process to its Coshocton Campus. This important master planning effort centered on the future development and expansion of that campus, specifically focusing on growth projections and space utilization as well as the physical expansion of facility assets and site amenities.

The systematic and integrated planning approach employed by the college ensures that all planning and resource allocation activities throughout every level of the institution are effectively linked and coordinated, and driven by the institution’s vision, mission and priorities. Using the strategic plan as a guide, the president’s executive leadership team has responsibility for leading and managing the process for allocating resources in the annual budget. The Executive Leadership Team consults with Unit Budget Managers (UBMs) and builds the annual operating and capital spending budget plan that the Board of Trustees reviews, adjusts if necessary, and adopts.

The resources of the college both advance strategic initiatives and support operational commitments, such as utility costs, salary and benefit increases, enterprise resource planning system implementation and capital development program operating costs. Part of the annual budget process is determining the cost of these operational commitments, evaluating whether or not they still exist as priorities, and determining how these needs balance against needs coming from strategic planning efforts. Each year, the Budget Office develops funding projections for college-wide costs for review by the COTC
president. These projections include:

- Initial or continued implementation of a college-wide compensation initiative: Executive leadership discussion (pp. Cover-2, pp. 3-4, pp. 5-6), policies (pp. 7-9), staff market data analysis (p. 10, p. 11, p. 12, p. 13), part-time faculty (pp. 14-15), compensation guidance (pp. 16-17), matrix recommendations (pp. 18-19, pp. 20-21, pp. 22-23, p. 24, p. 25), and Gateway Classification and Compensation Study (pp. 26-28, pp. 29-30, p. 31, p. 32).
- Inflationary and business needs such as supplies and utilities, fixed charges, software and hardware maintenance, and/or liability insurance.
- Enrollment growth funding at the current/projected rate, as well as potential increase at the rate equal to tuition increase, if applicable.

The Budget Office provides the estimates of the general fund resources available for the fiscal year allocations to fund various college needs. These resources consist of the balance of available funds remaining after estimates for mandates, as well as prior and on-going commitments. UBMs are asked to submit their cost-to-continue budgets and any new action plans in February of each year. The operating budgets are reviewed annually and adjusted for cost-to-continue or inflationary increases. The action plan submissions are a process for submitting new initiative requests, capital project requests, and personnel action requests. Managers are required to directly link any requests for new dollars in the annual budget process to specific priorities and objectives stated within the strategic plan. Only plans that are directly linked to the priorities and objectives are considered further in the budget process. This strategy ensures that allocated financial resources are in alignment with the college’s stated objectives.

The appropriate member of the executive leadership team must review and approve each action plan prior to submission to the Budget Office. The executive leadership team reviews and prioritizes all action plans and makes recommendations for funding to the president in March. The action plans are evaluated in terms of how well each plan advances the college's strategic plan.

All new ITS initiatives are required to adhere to the college's strategic planning process. The institution also uses a project management framework whereby a requirements analysis for each new ITS initiative is prepared by the academic or business area. Next, an advisory group of representatives from across each area prioritizes these initiatives. Capital project action plans are then developed by ITS, whereby linkages to strategic planning priorities and objectives are identified and documented in each plan. These finished plans are submitted to executive leadership for budget consideration. Once approved, ITS creates an annual project plan identifying milestones, timelines and resources. This plan is then managed throughout the year to ensure that projects are completed on time and within budget. This type of integrated planning process for ITS initiatives allows the institution to continually align its IT systems with the strategic plan and remain focused on the institutional mission and priorities established for the college.

The allocation of resources assigned to facilities and/or capital projects follows the same management framework processes as previously described for ITS initiatives, with all approved action plans linking to specific strategic planning priorities.

The **Budget Overview**, included in the annual budget document, provides evidence of resources being allocated in alignment with the colleges stated priorities and goals. **Eighty-three percent** of COTC’s employees believe that the institution makes sufficient budgetary resources available to achieve important objectives, providing further evidence of resources being allocated in alignment with the college's mission and priorities.
Processes for student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting are linked. COTC has a continuous assessment, evaluation and improvement cycle that is linked to planning and budgeting.

Student learning and academic programs are evaluated through assessment and the college’s formal program review. These processes are used to evaluate program effectiveness, identify improvement opportunities and resource needs for the program to be more effective, and prioritize allocation of resources. Questions included in the program review template help to link program evaluation to the budget process. Specifically, question 10 asks, "Does the college provide adequate support for your program (financially, administratively, and so on)?" The results of each program review are presented to executive leadership. Any identified needs are linked to the strategic and operational plans of the college and finally considered in the budget process.

Departmental planning is used to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas of improvement in the institution's operations. The recent evaluation of the Gateway serves as a good example. In support of continuous quality improvement and a commitment to customer service, the college devoted four months to the analysis of its Gateway operations. Under the leadership of a consultant and the vice president for extended campuses and gateway, all areas of the Gateway were examined with specific attention placed on personnel to identify new positions to support outreach and growth and to relocate staff where appropriate. Upon conclusion of the analysis, action plans were submitted to executive leadership as part of the spring budget planning process, resulting in several new positions.

The college employs a number of strategies to operationalize or sustain the strategic plan over time. To ensure that the plan remains relevant, an annual environmental scan is conducted and the college’s SWOT analysis is updated as necessary. Managers and directors whose strategic action plans are approved in the budget process are required to provide mid-year and year-end progress reports to document quality improvement, growth of the department or gain towards the outlined strategic directions. Another strategy to sustain the plan is the college’s operational plan. The operational plan translates the longer term strategic plan into short-term objectives in all areas of the institution set to achieve the strategic goals. All of the strategic projects and initiatives from departmental/unit work plans are rolled into the operational plan document that executive leadership use to monitor the institution's progress on meeting the priorities and objectives of the strategic plan.

In addition to these ongoing strategies, the college undertook a year-long initiative in 2014 to further engage supervisors and managers with the strategic plan to ensure that they routinely reference the plan and use it to guide their work. The initiative launched with a breakfast for supervisors and managers that included the CEO of Donatos Pizza as the keynote speaker. The initiative included an email campaign, book readings and other activities focused on operationalizing the plan and sparking conversation and discussion regarding its usefulness.

The college's planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups. COTC provides multiple avenues by which constituents may provide input into the strategic direction of the college.

The Strategic Planning Council (SPC) is the decision-making body that coordinates the college’s strategic planning efforts. The council is comprised of approximately 25 members representing faculty, staff, executive administration, students, and the extended campus advisory boards. Additionally, one member of the board serves as a liaison to the council. The council charter outlines the appointment process and terms of appointment. Faculty members serving in leadership roles on the Faculty Council and the faculty union are invited to serve two-year terms on the SPC. Staff members serve annual terms and may be reappointed for subsequent terms. The SPC meets twice
during the year—in the autumn, to conduct the annual environmental scan and to update the SWOT analysis; and in the spring, to evaluate progress.

The Strategic Planning Support Team, comprised of staff members from the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and the Office of Academic Affairs, supports the work of the Strategic Planning Council. The team’s Procedures and Guidelines document outlines the specific role of the team. Support team members are invited to all SPC meetings.

In addition to having representation on the SPC, the advisory boards for each of the college's extended campuses have a regular role in the planning process. Each advisory board assists in maintaining key relationships with external constituencies and offers advice and guidance, as appropriate, about its campus’s strategic plan and on long-range planning for the college. Two of their six meetings per year--one in the spring and one in the autumn--are dedicated to strategic planning.

Academic program advisory committees play an important role in the curriculum planning and evaluation process. Comprised of professionals, labor representatives and others knowledgeable about the specific academic program, the advisory committees ensure that the curriculum remains current and relevant. COTC has 21 academic program advisory committees involving more than 270 community members.

The college routinely engages in various surveys and studies to ensure that the perspectives of its constituents are considered in its planning processes. The Tripp-Umbach market analysis study, employee satisfaction surveys, the graduate survey, and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) include direct input and feedback from key constituent groups. The Tripp-Umbach market analysis study engaged employers, educators, workforce development leaders, and prospective and current students in qualitative and quantitative data collection and subsequent analysis to identify strengths, opportunities and projected workforce needs. Employee surveys are routinely conducted with faculty and staff, and provide information on their level of satisfaction and engagement and areas for improvement. The graduate survey provides direct feedback to the college from students on their current employment and with the preparation they received at the college. The CCSSE provides information about the level of student engagement, an indicator of learning, along with the student perspective on the satisfaction with importance of and utilization of selected student services.

The college’s current strategic planning documents were developed through a comprehensive and inclusive process that took into consideration the perspectives of all constituent groups. The documents were developed by members of the SPC with input from the faculty and staff, students, board members, community members and alumni during a year-long process of research, debate and consultation. The process was launched in January 2013, at the Board of Trustees’ meeting. In January and February 2013, a survey was conducted of all college’s constituents. Faculty, staff, board members, students, alumni and advisory committee members participated in the survey and responded to several open-ended questions to help inform the direction of the college over the next five years. In February and March, retreats were conducted with the fiduciary board to discuss the mission and vision. This work resulted in the confirmation and validation of the current mission and the endorsement of a new vision statement for the college. During the retreats, the board also participated in a SWOT analysis exercise. In April, a values survey was conducted with Staff Forum and online surveys were conducted with both - and part-time faculty. Also, in April, the SPC participated in an exercise to further define the college’s values and to help interpret the data collected from the constituent survey regarding college priorities. The extended campus advisory boards were also asked to participate in the priorities exercise. The draft plan was reviewed by and input was solicited from the broader campus community.
COTC plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution’s sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy and state support.

The college constantly monitors factors that influence its revenue sources, including enrollment, state developments and the economy. Many of the college's faculty, staff, and administrators participate regularly in meetings, symposia and gatherings which are designed to provide information and training related to development of institutional plans. Numerous opportunities have been provided and/or sponsored by the Ohio Association of Community Colleges and the Ohio Board of Regents. One example of a proactive step in this area is the participation of the institution’s vice president of business and finance in a statewide committee that was tasked in producing a completely remodeled formula for the distribution of state support funding for two-year colleges. This task resulted in a performance based funding formula that set Ohio ahead of most states in the country in this area.

Another potential area of significant growth and change is in high school dual credit opportunities. The Ohio Board of Regents released new directives to create a single set of guidelines to address this area, now called College Credit Plus. These guidelines affect all areas in the delivery of education to high school students, as well as the program's funding.

As a part of each year’s budget process, the Office of Business and Finance gathers information to make recommendations for enrollment projections. Information gathered includes prior year enrollment results, local high school feeder enrollments, early application trends, course load trends and other economic information that is available. At times, additional, special studies are commissioned to further inform the process. For example, the Tripp-Umbach research study, published in March 2013, provided details regarding projected headcounts at the Newark campus and at each of the extended campuses. The Office of Business and Finance works with the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and the Gateway to develop the ultimate enrollment projections recommended to the board as a part of the annual budget.

In addition to fiscal capacity, the college plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its facilities capacity. The Newark Campus Framework Plan describes various plans and implications related to the physical property of the college. This plan was developed in conjunction with COTC's campus partner, Ohio State Newark. Additional master planning efforts will be undertaken at each of the college's extended campus in the future, beginning with Coshocton.

Autumn 2012 provides evidence of flexibility built into the college’s planning processes to adapt in times of fluctuations in the environment. The college faced significant financial challenges as the result of a significant, unanticipated drop in enrollment that autumn semester. The change from a quarter-based academic calendar to a semester system combined with economic influences led to the unexpected statewide enrollment decline. The college reacted swiftly in FY13 to address the revenue shortfall and developed a comprehensive plan that not only right-sized the college budget but dealt with the shortfall in a permanent manner. This strategy has allowed the college to move forward in FY14 with a steady and deliberate recovery.

Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

The SPC anticipates emerging factors such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization annually in a structured and meaningful way. Each year, the SPC's autumn meeting is primarily devoted to updating the institution’s SWOT matrix, providing the SPC with a clear picture of
emerging opportunities or challenges that may impact the institution’s ability to achieve its mission.

Technological advancements are considered and investigated by the SPC. Topics often include emerging instructional technologies; digital storage and security; Bring Your Own Device (BYOD); broadband and wireless network access; mobile technology; website development; updates to academic program technologies; disruptive technologies and sustainability in facilities and operations; social media; ITS funding; accessibility of technology; and administrative and support technologies necessary to conduct business on a daily basis and connect with alumni, donors and the community.

The SPC examines information on demographic shifts occurring in Licking, Knox and Coshocton counties, as well as the state of Ohio overall, through the State and County Quick Facts produced by the U.S. Census Bureau. Data are also sourced from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services’ Ohio Labor Market Information website. In addition, reports on specific sub-groups of the population, such as racial minorities and non-traditional-age students, are studied for potential changes in their college-going behaviors.

Globalization is accounted for in many ways. Annually, the SPC examines educational and international trends for their potential impact on the college. This process includes reviewing reports developed by organizations such as the Global University Network for Innovation, the Center for Global Education, the Association for International Educators, and the Institute of International Education, which produces an annual report on the number and economic impact of both international students studying in Ohio and Ohio residents studying abroad. The SPC also considers the ways in which online learning is impacting the ability for students from all over the world to interact academically through various digital mediums, including massive open online courses (MOOCs). Within the classroom, topics in culture and diversity are examined in academic coursework, and COTC recognizes the importance of preparing students to be global citizens by offering a well-rounded, international perspective before they enter the workforce.

Sources

- AA.Academic Program Review Questions.2012 (page number 2)
- EXT.CAMP. Extended Campus Advisory Board Bylaws.2014
- FAC.Coshocton Campus Framework Planning and Proposals.2014
- GATE.The Gateway Report Recommendations.2013
- HR.Compensation Strategy_Executive Leadership Discussions_1.2.July 2014
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5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

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

Argument

The institution develops and documents evidence of performance.

COTC’s strategic plan articulates four distinct priorities. Specifically, Priority 4: achieve performance excellence, includes an emphasis on quality and continuous improvement. The college strives for quality and continuous improvement in processes, services, and programs for optimal efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility. Continuous improvement requires openness to change, and empowerment of employees to take ownership in their actions and challenge the status quo.

The college collects and analyzes data for both external reporting and internal evaluation. Institutional effectiveness is measured through a comprehensive set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Key indicators include but are not limited to enrollment, fiscal viability, student satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and employer satisfaction. Student success indicators include but are not limited to retention, graduation rate, program completion, and job placement. Each of the KPIs is linked to the organization’s strategic goals. The KPIs are reviewed each year at the Strategic Planning Council’s spring meeting and are reported to the Board of Trustees annually. The key indicators are measured as follows:

- Enrollment: unduplicated headcount captured during autumn semester.
- Fiscal viability: financial reports and audited data
- Student satisfaction: data from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement conducted every three years (last conducted 2014).
- Employee satisfaction: Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey every two years (last conducted 2013)
- Employer satisfaction: Employer Satisfaction Survey and interviews
- Retention: IPEDS full-time and part-time retention report
- Graduation rate: IPEDS graduation rate
- Program completion: IPEDS number of degrees or certificates awarded
- Job placement: annual graduate survey.

At the program level, accredited programs complete comprehensive self-studies that validate compliance with criteria. Many programs, such as Nursing, have systematic plans for evaluation in place in compliance with both accrediting and regulatory bodies. Non-accredited programs complete comprehensive program reviews, identifying the strengths and areas for development in those programs. Both systematic evaluation and program reviews are utilized to identify trends, analyze needs and develop action plans to address those needs.

Learns from operational experience
As noted, the college collects data from various sources throughout the institution and utilizes that data to guide continuous improvement. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness is a pivotal support for departments, divisions and the organization.

The following are just a few examples of strategies implemented to address opportunities for improvement.

- **Annual Faculty Development Days** - The agenda for this annual event is developed based on feedback from COTC faculty about their needs. Topics are chosen to foster development and effectiveness of the educators.

- **Nursing Student Outcomes** - Due to sub-optimal licensure pass rates, the Nursing department embarked on a comprehensive analysis of contributing factors and mapped strategies to improve student outcomes.

- **College Completion Plan** - In spring 2014, a Complete College Ohio Plan was written, approved by the Board of Trustees and submitted to the Ohio Board of Regents. The plan identified policy and practice improvement objectives in the areas of connection, first-year entry, progress, completion, and workforce alignment. Strategies to address the objectives, outcomes as indicators of success and measurement and evaluation of outcomes are included in the plan.

- **eLearning Study** - In 2012, the HLC gave the college the authority to expand distance education up to 100 percent of total degree programs. Before moving forward with additional online courses and/or program offerings, the college initiated a comprehensive analysis of the COTC Virtual Campus, also referred to as eLearning. Two major goals were addressed through the study—assessing the quality of the current online offerings and assessing the quantity of online options available to students at COTC. The purpose of the study was to identify areas of strength and weaknesses in the COTC Virtual Campus as well as provide recommendations to improve areas of weakness.

- **Gateway Consultation** - A comprehensive analysis of the college’s Gateway office which includes records, recruiting, and advising, was conducted to address the needs of students in both the onboarding and retention processes. The college engaged the services of a highly-experienced, external consultant to assist with the analysis and provide training for Gateway staff. The consultation resulted in a number of deliverables including customer service training for advisors.

- **Student Focus Groups** - A team of faculty and staff members took part in hands-on focus group training in spring 2012. This training included conducting 11 focus groups aimed at understanding barriers to first year student success at the college. In addition to identifying common barriers, student participants were asked about the steps they took to overcome each challenge, the knowledge and advice they would share with someone experiencing the same challenge, and the changes they would make to help students overcome this challenge if they were the president of the college. At the core of the initiative was the opportunity to provide students with a structured format to share feedback about their experiences, attitudes and assumptions. A framework was created through this process and made available to many areas of the institution, with the goal being continued quality improvement. The information collected during the first year student barriers sessions was analyzed by the faculty and staff focus group facilitators.

- **Staff Performance Management process** - During FY13 the college undertook a review of the performance management process that resulted in a process closely aligned with the institution’s strategic plan. Individual performance plans focus on clear position description-based and exceptional objectives, professional development and the overall success of the institution. The process is designed to encourage and reward high performance, offer definite
remediation objectives for low performers and provide clear accountability for everyone. The planning and appraisal process relies on a straightforward, easy-to-use instrument focused on reporting overall accountability and merit as part of the annual merit compensation process. Appraisers have the flexibility of utilizing necessary measures appropriate for their respective areas. These measures support the overall reported rating of a high-standard “successful,” or one of two exception-based ratings, “unsatisfactory” or “extraordinary.” Enabling further adaptability and support for the college’s strategic guiding principles of fiscal responsibility, accountability and sustainability, the instrument was intentionally designed for easy and efficient future adaptation to a 100 percent electronic format for use and retention, with an option for hardcopy printout.

Sources

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- AA.Faculty Development Agenda.2013
- AA.HTH.NUR.SPE Revised NLNAC_Program Plan for Evaluation.August 2012
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- HR.Performance Management Project Plan.2012-2013
- IRE.eLearning Comprehensive Study.August 2013
- IRE.Focus Group Findings_Top Common Themes.2012
- IRE.Goal Level KPIs as of 14SP.2014
- PLNNG.COTC 2014-2018 Strategic Plan_Focusing On Our Purpose_Full.2013
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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

By design, COTC’s budgetary and planning processes ensure that resources are allocated to maintain and strengthen the institution’s educational programs and enhance student learning. In addition to three extended campuses, the college shares a 175-acre campus with The Ohio State University at Newark. This cost-shared partnership not only significantly increases the range of facilities and programs that the community and COTC students, faculty and staff can access and use, but also produces a multitude of operational and financial efficiencies.

During the college’s most recent strategic planning process, four mission-driven priorities were identified that the majority of COTC employees believe are realistic and appropriate in light of the institution’s organization, resources and opportunities. The college’s hiring practice, recruitment and selection policy, and emphasis on continued professional development ensure the qualified faculty and staff base necessary for the college to maintain its focus on these priorities.

COTC has a well-defined organizational structure demonstrating clear lines of authority, reporting and formal relationships from the Board of Trustees to front-line employees. Board members, faculty, staff and students also have several opportunities to become involved in defining the college’s strategic direction and to assist in setting policy.

In an effort to ensure that all planning and resource allocation activities throughout every level of the institution are effectively linked and coordinated, and driven by the institution’s vision, mission, and priorities, COTC utilizes three types of planning that identify and evaluate both short- and long-term objectives. Because the college strives for quality and continuous improvement in processes, services and programs, it employs several data collection methods to guide continuous improvement in its effectiveness, capabilities and sustainability.

Sources

There are no sources.