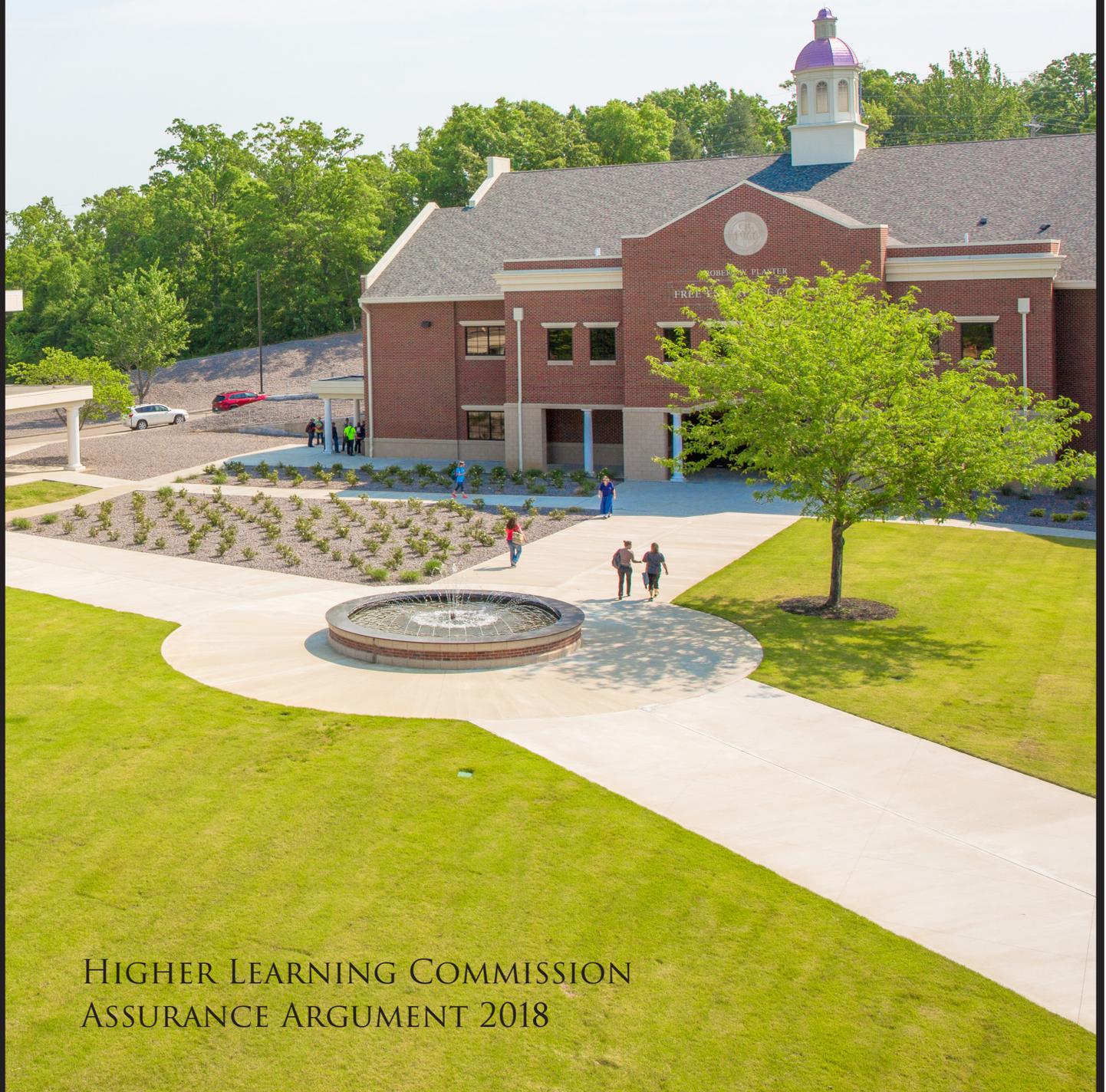


# THREE RIVERS COLLEGE



HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION  
ASSURANCE ARGUMENT 2018

# THREE RIVERS COLLEGE

THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF SOUTHEAST MISSOURI

WESLEY A. PAYNE, PH.D., *President*

Suite 215, Westover Administration Building  
2080 Three Rivers Blvd | Poplar Bluff, MO 63901  
Tel: 573-840-9698 | Fax: 573-840-9169  
wpayne@trcc.edu | trcc.edu

March 21, 2018

Dear Higher Learning Commission Review Team:

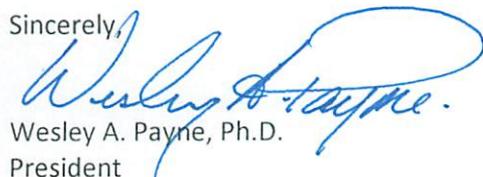
Welcome to Three Rivers College (TRC) and to Southeast Missouri. We are looking forward to your visit and having the opportunity to share with you all of the great things that are happening and the many improvements that have been made.

In preparation for your visit, we have engaged in a thorough self-study process that has been arduous, enlightening, and highly rewarding. The preparation of the assurance argument has involved the time and talents of many individuals from across the College. The collection of documents, writing, rewriting, and editing of the argument and the journey through the last ten years of our college has reminded us all how much we have accomplished and how very far we have come. I want to give praise and thanks to the many people who were involved in this process, the College Cabinet, the HLC Steering Committee, Faculty, Staff, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness who led the self-study and facilitated the creation of the Assurance Argument. I also want to say thank you to every member of the faculty and staff, each of which has done invaluable work in getting us to where we are today.

Looking back to the previous decennial review, the resultant focused visit, and the enormous amount of work that has been done across the College to bring us to where we are is astounding. The Assurance Argument and the hundreds of evidentiary documents will provide you with a picture of where we are now, how we are observing and upholding the Commission's Obligations of Affiliation, and how we are meeting the standards of the Higher Learning Commission. What the Assurance Argument does not show is the incredible journey we have taken together, as a team, since 2008 and the amount of effort that has been put forth by every individual at the College to systematically examine our methods and operations to improve as an institution of Higher Learning.

While meeting the standards of the Higher Learning Commission is a wonderful result of our collective work, meeting the standards was not the purpose of our journey. We, as a College, embarked on our journey so that we could better serve our students and do more to help them succeed and build a better future. As a College, we are proud of the improvements we have made and recognize that ours is a journey of a lifetime we will continue to travel for our students.

Sincerely,



Wesley A. Payne, Ph.D.  
President

# **Assurance Argument**

# **Three Rivers College - MO**

**3/23/2018**

## 1 - Mission

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

### 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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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

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(1.A.1) The Three Rivers College (TRC) mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature of the institution and [is adopted by the governing board](#). The mission of the College is reviewed on a regular basis as part of strategic plan development. The current mission statement is a result of the latest review during the creation of the 2015-2020 strategic plan and is as follows:

Three Rivers College inspires, prepares, and empowers students to succeed through open access to high-quality learning opportunities that meet the needs of the communities we serve.

The mission is informed by the following commitments:

- Open access to educational programs to prepare students for transfer to a four-year baccalaureate institution, as well as programs of career and technical education to prepare students for entry or advancement in the global workforce.
- Comprehensive academic services, learning resources, basic skills development and educational opportunities for students of diverse cultural, socioeconomic and academic backgrounds.
- Support services and student activities to enhance individual growth and academic potential.
- Collaborative partnerships to develop specialized programs that meet the changing needs of business and industry, government, secondary schools and other colleges and universities.

- Lifelong learning opportunities for individuals, who wish to improve job performance, develop new skills or pursue personal interests.
- Community services that support and encourage the economic, civic and cultural vitality of the region.

The review and development of the mission statement was conducted by a diverse group of individuals representing all areas of the College, including students and community members, as shown on [page 3 of 2020 Vision](#). A significant amount of discussion occurred around the specific revision of the mission of the College and included feedback from numerous stakeholders as solicited by the members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Prior to the submission of the revised mission to the Board of Trustees for approval the mission statement was sent to all employees and received a 93.8% approval rating from the 112 employees who responded. The revised mission statement was presented to the Three Rivers College Board of Trustees on November 19, 2014 and was adopted by unanimous vote, as shown by the [Board Meeting Minutes of that date](#).

In addition to the College mission, the College Vision statement was adopted in 2010 and the same year, a comprehensive process revealed the Core Values of the institution.

(1.A.2) The academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile of Three Rivers College is consistent with its mission to *inspire, prepare, and empower students to succeed through open access to high-quality learning opportunities that meet the needs of the communities we serve*.

As a comprehensive community college, Three Rivers College provides a wide array of educational programs designed to serve the needs of students. TRC serves students transferring to baccalaureate granting institutions, students seeking to enter the workforce after completing a program of study, as well as those who are academically unprepared or underprepared for college level coursework. The College also serves business and industry with skill development programs, and community stakeholders with a limited number of continuing education courses.

For students seeking to transfer to other institutions, TRC offers the Associate of Arts with 29 programs of study, the Associate of Science with 8 programs of study, and the Associate of Arts in Teaching with 5 programs of study. TRC offers 20 Associate of Applied Science programs, 29 one-year certificates and 12 certificate programs for students seeking to be employed at the end of their program. These programs are listed in the [College catalog on pages 46-48](#). Faculty develop and propose new programs through a rigorous curriculum review process that is outlined in policy [IP 6210](#) and regulation [IR 6211](#) -Curriculum Development. The curriculum is designed to ensure programs are appropriate to the mission of the College and are approved by the faculty as shown through the attached curriculum proposal, curriculum committee minutes, and faculty minutes attached as [curriculum process documents](#). The development of the programs utilizes labor market data, economic development and job opportunity data, and advisory board input, as appropriate to the program. TRC provides a dynamic array of

transitional courses and support services designed to increase the academic abilities of students and considers these courses vital in providing accessible education to the service area.

In addition to academic accessibility, access to education is promoted throughout its fifteen-county service region by means of traditional in-seat, hybrid (a combination of in-seat and online), online, Interactive Television (ITV), and dual credit courses as shown by the enrollment patterns described in the [Factbook](#). Geographic accessibility is also promoted through the six external locations in Dexter, Piedmont, Kennett, Sikeston, Malden, and Cape Girardeau, in addition to its main campus in Poplar Bluff.

The Mission of the College is in line with the demographic profile of the enrolled students. The general demographics of the four-county taxing districts and the fifteen-county voluntary service area as shown by the demographic data in the College [Factbook](#). This data also shows that the majority of students come from the taxing district and almost all students are from the voluntary service region.

The College offers a wide range of academic and student support services to meet the needs of its students. Services are appropriate to the enrolled population of mostly commuter students enrolled in transfer programs. Services that support students include an orientation, testing, advising, tutoring, loan default management, disability services, veteran services, financial aid, and a university center. College advisors are assigned and available to every student throughout their time with the College and work in partnership with faculty to ensure students progress with as few issues as possible following the processes outlined in the [Advising Manual](#).

Tutoring services are available, primarily in the subjects of English and mathematics as well as a limited number of subject areas through the Tutoring and Learning Center (TLC) and at external locations. The TLC is certified through the [College Reading and Learning Association \(CRLA\)](#).

The Office of Disability Services provides support and accommodations to students who self identify. Services provided include note taking, test reading, specialized desk or chairs, individualized testing and interpreting services. A complete listing of services can be found in the Office of [Disability Services Manual](#).

TRC offers Title IV Federal Financial Aid, State Aid, and institutional scholarships to eligible students. The types and quantity of aid awarded at the College are shown in the [College catalog on page 23](#) and on the College website under the financial aid section.

(1.A.3.) This sub-component is also addressed within Criterion 5.C.1. The planning and budgeting priorities of TRC align with and support the mission of the College. During the creation of [2020 Vision](#), the current strategic plan of the College, the mission was reviewed, revised and adopted by the Board of Trustees. The six strategic themes of 2020 Vision were created, after much discussion and an environmental scan. The six strategic themes of 2020 Vision are as follows:

- Excellent Student Service
- High Quality Instruction
- Learning Environment
- Resource Development
- Student Enrollment, Retention, and Transfer
- Team Member Development

Each of the themes above is supported by a specific initiative and multiple strategies. Each year, the College Cabinet reviews the progress of 2020 Vision, as shown in the [2016](#) and [2017](#) strategic planning accomplishments reports, and creates the annual planning priorities for the coming planning cycle as outlined in the [Institutional Effectiveness Manual](#). The strategic plan of the College, 2020 Vision, the [College Facilities Master Plan](#) and [Update](#), and the annual planning priorities form the basis to begin the annual planning and budgeting cycle. The College utilizes a zero-based budgeting model, as shown in [FP3103](#) Budget Preparation and Adoption. After collaborating with their team, planning unit managers request both operating expenses and enhancements (new budget requests), providing written justification and documentation for both. This process allows for [data informed decisions](#) to be embedded within the budget preparation process.

All budget enhancement requests must be part of a complete continuous improvement plan and must be tied to at least one annual planning priority, which are tied to the five-year strategic plan, ensuring that budget allocations and priorities align with and support the mission of the College.

## Sources

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- 1.A.1.Minutes-RegSession-111914 - Adoption of Mission Statement
- 1.A.2.Advising Manual - Copy
- 1.A.2.CRLA\_Certificate.TRC.pdf
- 1.A.2.Curriculum\_Process\_Documents.TRC.pdf
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- FP3103 Budget Preparation and Adoption-Binder-CFO
- Institutional Effectiveness Manual 2017.pdf

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- IP6210 Curriculum Development-Binder-CAO
- IR6211 Curriculum Development-Binder-CAO

## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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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

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(1.B.1) Three Rivers College clearly articulates its vision, mission, and core values through numerous [public documents](#). The vision, mission, and core values are [published on the College website](#), the College catalog on [page 12](#), in the strategic plan of the College 2020 VISION on [page 4](#), and is contained in the [College Handbook Template](#), which is used as the basis for all public handbooks.

Human Resources provides information the College Vision, Mission, and Core Values and provides a [pocket mission statement card](#) as part of New Employee Orientation. The mission, vision

, and other College information are also in the [Employee Handbook on page 6](#).

(1.B.2) The mission documents of the College are current and [reflect the mission](#) as revised during the creation of the current College strategic plan, 2020 VISION, and approved by the Board of Trustees. The emphasis of the College on access, and educational opportunities that meet the needs of our communities is clearly outlined in the College mission and the commitment statements that inform the mission [as shown on the College website](#).

The TRC mission and the commitments that inform the mission, the vision statement and the core values guide all operations of the College as shown through the College strategic plan – [2020 VISION](#), the facilities master plan [2013](#) and updated [2018](#), the [technology plan](#), the annual continuous improvement plans, and the College budget. The strategic plan of the College was created as a five-year plan designed to guide the operations of the College in the fulfillment of the College mission.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee, as shown on [page 3](#) of 2020 VISION, made up of a diverse group of Three Rivers faculty, staff, administrators, and students, revised the mission for Three Rivers College. Next, the group decided on the following seven

strategic themes needed to reach that mission, along with initiatives and strategies for each theme as shown in 2020 VISION.

Theme: Excellent Student Service

Initiative: The College will continue to make student success the top priority as we provide open access to high quality education at a reasonable cost. Therefore, we must continue to employ effective processes and develop better systems to serve our students efficiently.

Strategies:

- Grow Academic Advisor Capacity.
- Assess and Improve Advising and Registration Processes.
- Expand Student Accounts Capacity.
- Assess and Improve Financial Aid Processes.
- Improve Communication to Students.
- Refine Policies and Procedures for Student Services.
- Clarify Curricular Requirements.
- Better Utilize Student Feedback for Informed Decisions.

Theme: High Quality Instruction

Initiative: The College will continue to shape its culture by making learning our first priority and the driving force behind all initiatives, decisions, and policy development.

Strategies:

- Expand and Improve Policies, Processes and Procedures.
- Enhance Instructor Training and Support.
- Build a Supportive Environment for Adjunct Instructors.
- Align Salaries with Peer Institutions.
- Attract and Retain High Quality Candidates through Competitive Salaries.
- Promote Quality Higher Education Instruction.
- Maintain Learning Resources Appropriate to Curriculum.
- Champion Innovative Teaching Strategies.
- Promote a Culture of Continuous Learning and Improvement.

Theme: Learning Environment

Initiative: The College will create a dynamic, safe and caring student-first physical learning environment that promotes open access to opportunities for all students of diverse backgrounds, and ensures their preparation for success in a global world.

Strategies:

- Maintain Facilities in Support of Learning.
- Support a Comprehensive Maintenance Program to align with Master Plan.
- Ensure a Sustainable and Flexible Technology Infrastructure.
- Enhance Safety and Security.

Theme: Resource Development

Initiative: The College will seek alternative funding sources and utilize resources in a responsible manner.

Strategies:

- Expand and Improve Scholarship Opportunities for Students.

- Seek Targeted Alternate Funding Streams.
- Foster a Culture of Data Informed Decisions.
- Create and Maintain Partnerships.
- Seek Informed Cost Savings for Efficient Operations.
- Develop and Implement Focused Fund Raising Activities.

Theme: Student Enrollment, Retention, and Transfer

Initiative: The College will continue to develop and improve student retention initiatives that align with a supportive infrastructure to provide the best possible outcome for our students to set and achieve their goals. Program completion and job placement rates are a measure of our commitment to student success.

Strategies:

- Increase Student Completion Rates.
- Increase Fall to Fall Student Retention Rates.
- Increase Student Transfer Rates.
- Improve Job Placement Rates.
- Focus Enrollment Initiatives for Targeted Programs.
- Build and Expand Relationships with Educational Partners.
- Develop Comprehensive Student Retention Initiatives.

Theme: Team Member Development

Initiative: The College will build a team of highly skilled and trained individuals leading to an improved student learning culture, excellent services and more efficient operations.

Strategies:

- Develop and Implement Training for Emerging Technologies.
- Provide Professional Development Opportunities.
- Support New Initiatives through Training.
- Advocate Cross-training Opportunities.
- Improve New Team Member Orientation Processes.
- Provide Resources for Wellness and Support.

From the strategic plan, the facilities master plan, the annual planning priorities, and continuous improvement plans the College budget is developed. The strategic themes tie to the mission of the College and the goals, objectives, and outcomes contained in the facilities master plan and the annual continuous improvement plan are specifically aligned with the outlined strategic themes and underlying strategies to ensure the College continues to work to fulfill its mission. The College budget is developed each year in support of the annual continuous improvement plan and the facilities master plan. The intentional linkage of the annual continuous improvement plan and the facilities master plan to the College strategic plan creates an environment where the College mission is apparent in every activity the College participates in.

(1.B.3) TRC monitors its progress in fulfilling its mission and the College strategic plan, [2020 VISION](#), as shown by the [2016](#) and [2017](#) Strategic Planning Accomplishments reports. Prior to the start of the annual planning cycle, the College Cabinet reviews the progress made on the strategic plan and determines the planning priorities for the next year. These planning priorities serve as the focus points for the planning and budgeting

cycle and are designed to emphasize specific areas of need in the strategic plan. Each planning manager develops the annual continuous improvement plan and associated budget requests, each of which must be tied directly to at least one part of the strategic plan and one planning priority as described in the [Institutional Effectiveness Manual](#).

Once the complete continuous improvement plan and the line item budget, are approved by the board, as shown in [board minutes](#), the line item budget is posted publicly on the College website with the other mission documents. This process ensures the operations of the College both strive for continuous improvement and that the operations of the College serve the intended constituents outlined in the College mission and the statements that inform the mission.

## Sources

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- 1.B.1.Standardized.Handbook.template.TJ.2017.10.10
- 1.B.1.TRC.pocket.mission.statement.TRC.pdf
- 1.B.2. College Website. Vision, Mission, Core Values
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- 2020 VISION (page number 4)
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- BP0211-College Mission-FINAL-2016 09 21.1.pdf
- Employee Handbook
- Employee Handbook (page number 6)
- Facilities Master Plan-Binder
- Institutional Effectiveness Manual 2017.pdf
- Technology\_Plan\_FY18

## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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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

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(1.C.1) The TRC mission states the College inspires, prepares, and empowers students to succeed through open access to high-quality learning opportunities that meet the needs of the communities we serve.

In fulfilling our open-access mission the College provides equal opportunities to all members of the community, students, faculty and staff without regard to race, color, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender, or national origin as shown in College policy [GAP 1200 Equal Opportunity](#). Additionally, the College policy forbids harassment of any kind and protects the civil rights of students, faculty and staff through [GAP 1210 Civil Rights](#) and the associated regulations for personnel [PR 4840 Title IX for Employees](#) and [SR 2120 Title IX for Students](#). These values are further addressed in [IP 6710 Faculty Rights and Responsibilities](#). The College policies and regulations are posted on the College website. The contact information for the Title IX Co-coordinators are listed on [page 7 of the Student Handbook](#).

In recognition of a diverse range of abilities of incoming students in an open access environment, TRC provides an orientation course and academic life skills course to ensure the greatest potential for success. The design of the courses focus on succeeding in a college environment and balancing the challenges faced in college and life as shown by the attached [master and course syllabi](#) for the courses. By providing these courses to all students and requiring it of those academically underprepared students the College demonstrates a recognition of the diverse educational background of its students. The College also provides transitional courses for students who have need of additional academic preparation in the areas of English, mathematics, and reading. The Tutoring and Learning Center (TLC), which has earned certification as an International Tutor Training Program by the College Reading and Learning Association to certify tutors at level 1, stage 2 as shown by the attached [CRLA Certification](#), provides tutoring, primarily in English and mathematics, and other discipline areas available on a limited basis. All tutors are either certified or seeking certification as shown by the attached [ITTPC Tutor Certificates](#).

To serve students with special needs, TRC provides a variety of support services for those students with physical or mental disabilities. Services are outlined in the Office of [Disability Services Manual](#) and are available to students who self-report a need as covered in [SP 2115](#) and [SR 2115 Disability Services for Students](#).

TRC is committed to its veteran population and employs a veteran's coordinator in the Office of Financial Aid ([job description](#)) to guide veterans in seeking appropriate federal aid. In addition, TRC provides in-district tuition as shown in [SP 2215 Student Residency](#) for veterans and their eligible dependents.

(1.C.2) The curriculum at Three Rivers College provides opportunities for students to learn and engage in cultures and civilizations. This can be observed by the faculty's adoption of [Cultural Awareness](#) as one of the college-wide outcomes, in the College's inventory of courses, and student course learning outcomes.

General education courses speak directly to expanding students' knowledge of other cultures and are included in the [assessment schedule](#) for cultural awareness. Those courses include: World Civilization to/since the Renaissance (HIST 121/122); World Foods and Society (AGRI 190); History and Appreciation of Art, Music, Theater, and Film (ARTS 123, MUSC 123, THEA 120, THEA 122); Environmental Science (BIOL 102); World Literature to/since 1600 (ENGL 221/222); Classical Mythology (ENGL 223); Regional Geography of the Eastern and Western World (GEOG 111/112); International Relations (GOVT 233); Seminar in Global Studies (GLBL 120); Introduction to Philosophy (PHIL 200); Religions of the World (PHIL 243); General Sociology (SOCI 111); Race and Ethnicity (SOCI 221); and Elementary and Intermediate Spanish (SPAN 101/102/201/202). (Course descriptions from Catalog pgs. [161-192](#) and General Education in Catalog [pg. 44](#))

One example of cultural diversity comes from [General Sociology \(SOCI 111\)](#) where students apply their knowledge of the terms ethnocentrism and cultural relativism in food customs; the death rituals of the Malagasy; and recognition of subcultures within their own society. In another example from [Race and Ethnicity \(SOCI 221\)](#) students examine issues revolving around race and ethnic groups in America. [Religions of the World \(PHIL 243\)](#) allows intellectual discovery of various religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity and challenges students of their preconceived ideas with respect to these religions. Each of these courses contain [specific assignments](#) designed to address human diversity.

The Social Science department also made assignments in their primary general education courses (GOVT 121, HIST 111/112, PSYC 111, SOCI 111) to ensure students would be exposed to the concept. Each course took a discipline specific approach. The [Social Sciences Common Assessments](#) demonstrate how HIST 111 students were exposed to classic works regarding race such as Helen Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor* about abuses of Native Americans in California. HIST 112 has students address race through writings of W.E.B. DuBois and Richard Wright. PSYC 111 and SOCI 111 look at topics such as race and the individual and race within the group.

Additionally, the TRC Tinnin Center [productions](#) in theater, music, and art introduces cultural diversity to those in the region.

Students have opportunities to be involved in [student organizations](#) wide-ranging in scope. From Agriculture, Business, Nursing, Athletic, to Gay-Straight Alliance,

Multicultural Organization, Spanish Club, Veterans, and Writing Circle, students at Three Rivers College have opportunities to be a part of groups that appreciate and recognize cultural awareness and diversity in the world that surrounds them. In FY 17, the College budgeted funds to [promote awareness](#) for items such as Women Awareness, Black History Month, and Hispanic Month.

In addition to the College's curriculum and sponsored events, Three Rivers College values and respects diversity as a policy. The College has adopted [GAP 1210 Civil Rights](#) which states:

Three Rivers College is committed to providing equal opportunity in all areas of education, recruiting, hiring, retention, promotion, and contracted service. The College further commits itself to the policy that there shall be no unlawful discrimination against any person because of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender, or national origin.

The College's [equal opportunity policy](#) extends to prohibitions against unlawful harassment of students or employees because of the individual's race, color, religion, disability, age, gender, or national origin. The prohibition against harassment include, but is not limit to, disparaging comments, written material, physical assaults, verbal threats, and offensive pranks.

## Sources

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- 1.C.1.Master\_and\_Course\_Syllabi.TRC.pdf
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- 1.C.2.Assessment\_Schedule.TRC.pdf
- 1.C.2.Cultural\_Awareness.TRC.pdf
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- IP6710 Faculty Rights and Responsibilities-Binder-CAO
- PR4840 Title IX for Employees-Binder
- SP2115 Disability Services for Students-Binder-CSSO
- SP2215 Student Residency-Binder-CSSO
- SR2115 Disability Services for Students-Binder
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- Student Handbook-2017-2018
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## 1.D - Core Component 1.D

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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

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(1.D.1) Three Rivers College takes its obligations to the communities it serves seriously by making decisions and taking action that clearly demonstrates an understanding that our educational roles entail a [public obligation](#). The mission, which states that "Three Rivers College inspires, prepares, and empowers students to succeed through open access to high-quality learning opportunities that meet the needs of the communities we serve" shows an [understanding of this obligation](#).

One example of the College's action to support the public good is the dual credit program that is embedded in over 40 high schools across the fifteen county service area. Through this program, high school students who qualify academically can enroll in college level courses at a discounted tuition. During the Fall 2017 semester, 451 students enrolled in 2,038 credit hours, representing 6% of the total enrollment of the College as shown by the Fall 2017 Census Report on [page 3](#). Of these 451, sixty-seven were enrolled in the CollegeNow partnership between TRC and the Poplar Bluff High School. Under this partnership, the College has agreed to waive 1/3 of the discounted tuition, the high school provides 1/3 of the tuition and the dual credit student is allowed to enroll in courses equating to 1/3 of the discounted dual credit tuition.

The creation of numerous Career and Technical Programs is also driven by the obligation to our communities. These programs are required to organize community advisory boards that guide their operations and the structure of their programming as shown by [advisory board minutes](#). Additionally, the College has created new programs to meet the needs of the community. The new Welding Program, as shown through [curriculum minutes](#), was created to serve the needs of two local industries; Trident Marine and Rice Trailers. The Welding Program was initially located in Caruthersville, MO., and has since been moved to Dexter, MO. It provides a more regional approach to the need for welders. The College assumed three failing Practical Nursing Programs from the area Career Technical Centers to keep them from being closed as shown by a [press release](#) and

[curriculum minutes](#). As a result, these programs have remained in place and meet a high community need for medical professionals.

The College also supports its communities through customized training activities. Each year, numerous manufacturers across the service area participate in customized training activities as shown by the [2017-2018 Customized Training Schedule](#). These training programs ensure a skilled workforce and aid in the economic development of our communities. In addition, TRC has been the administrator for major [job creation and job retention programs](#). Through these programs, millions of dollars have been allocated to support the workforce of manufacturers in the College's service area.

The College serves the public good through another initiative known as the Patrons of the Arts Program. Through this program, the College provides the opportunity for the community to engage in high quality entertainment and cultural events that, because of community donations are offered at a greatly reduced price than otherwise possible. A full [arts schedule](#) of public fine arts performances are made available at the TRC Tinnin Fine Arts Center.

(1.D.2) At Three Rivers, educational responsibilities take priority over all other activities and are clearly prioritized in the budget allocation process. [2020 VISION](#), the College's strategic plan is the guiding principle to the annual planning and budget development process.

In the [2016-2017 TRC IPEDS Data](#), 69.17% (\$18 million) of funds expended were allocated to instruction, academic support, student services and scholarships. Three Rivers reports several expenses such as technology and institutional effectiveness centrally. As such, they are reported to IPEDS in the institutional support functional category. Of the 16.37% (\$4.3 million) total expenses allocated to institutional support, 7.94% (\$2.1 million) supports instruction and student services activities. Additionally, Three Rivers reports several expenses such as the operations of the theatre and student testing to IPEDS in the auxiliary enterprise functional category. Of the 13.76% (\$3.6 million) total expenses allocated to auxiliary enterprises, 1.41% (\$367,000) supports instruction and student services activities.

In summary, 78.52% of total expenses reported to IPEDS for the 2016-2017 year were in direct support of the core educational mission (\$20.1 million out of \$26.1 million total expenses).

(1.D.3) Three Rivers College engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

As an institution of higher learning, Three Rivers College serves as a natural partner for local organizations. For example, the College works closely with the local Boys and Girls Club bringing junior and senior high students to the College to experience special activities hosted by College faculty and staff. For instance, in the spring 2017, faculty and staff hosted field trip events for local students covering topics such as C.S.I., Nursing and Allied Health, Theater, a drone demonstration, and a mini-basketball camp, as evidenced by the [2017 Boys and Girls Club Field Trip Schedule](#). TRC also works with the Boys and

Girls Club each Christmas by providing Christmas trees and presents to families in need as evidenced by the emails shown in Boys and [Girls Club Christmas Trees and Gifts Partnership](#).

The College Faculty support the advancement of girls in STEM fields by hosting an event at TRC in conjunction with local high schools known as [Big Bang Theory](#). The College hosts the Division of Youth Services graduation yearly as evidenced by the [DYS Graduation Program](#). This event serves as a celebration and a promise of a future. By hosting the event at the College, we plant the seed that there is a future and Three Rivers College would be a place for that future to begin.

Three Rivers College has hosted the Technology Education Association of Missouri (TEAM) District Competition known as the Industrial Technology Fair for over fifteen years as a partnership between the College's technology programs and area high schools as shown by the [Industrial Tech Fair Program](#) and the [2016 Industrial Technology Fair Release](#). Each year students from participating high schools select their competition project and work on it for the duration of the school year. In April these high schools converge on Three Rivers' campus to showcase their projects in the following: computer applications, drafting, electricity/electronics, graphic arts, industrial crafts/plastics, metalwork, photography, power and energy, robotics, technology exploration, and woodworking. An awards ceremony concludes this competition and the following awards are given: Best in Show, which includes a scholarship to Three Rivers, Best in Class, State Qualifiers, and Best School. Hosting this event allows the College to interact with students who think they cannot attend college or students beyond our county service areas that would otherwise never see our campus. This event is open to students in grades 7-12.

In honor of the area military veterans, the College hosts two significant community events as evidenced by the [Veterans Day Program](#) and the [Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Program](#). The first event is in recognition of Veteran's Day and the second in honor of Vietnam Veterans. The events are always well attended and serve to both honor our veterans and to expose the area [veterans](#) to the [opportunities](#) available at the College and in the community.

Service to the public also entails hosting cultural events as shown by the [Tinnin Fine Arts Schedule](#). One long term example is the annual Jazz Festival, hosted by the TRC Music Department. Over the last 27 years, the festival has brought thousands of area junior high, high school, and college bands to Three Rivers for the opportunity to work in clinics with jazz experts. Three Rivers College houses rotating exhibits throughout the year featuring the work of artists around the nation as well as local talents in the Art Gallery of the Tinnin Center, which is open to the public. Additionally, there are holiday concerts and plays that the public is encouraged to attend.

Each year, the College hosts a counselor's conference for area high schools to build understanding of how the College can better serve the counselors, high schools and the students. Evidence of the event is provided through this [agenda](#).

The College also engages with its constituents through the use of Advisory Boards, who provide feedback and guidance to the career programs of the College, as evidenced by sample [Advisory Board minutes](#). These boards meet at least once per year to discuss the state of the program and to provide feedback to the College. The feedback of the board is integral to the improvement of the programs and the concurrence of the advisory board is required for major curriculum changes to career programs, as evidenced by the [curriculum form example](#).

## Sources

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- 1.D.3.2016\_Industrial\_Technology\_Fair\_Release.TRC.pdf
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- 1.D.3.Boys\_and\_Girls\_Club\_Field\_Trip\_Schedule\_2017.TRC.pdf
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- 1.D.3.DYS\_Graduation\_Program.TRC.pdf
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- 1.D.3.Sample\_Advisory Committee Minutes.TRC.pdf
- 1.D.3.Tinnin\_Fine\_Arts\_Schedule.TRC.pdf
- 1.D.3.Veteran's Day Program
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- 2020 VISION

- Agenda Counselors Conference 12-1-17.pdf
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- SP2180 Military Duty-Binder-CSSO
- SR2180 Military Duty-Binder

## **1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

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The Mission of Three Rivers College is clear, current, and articulated publicly in numerous ways as shown in this section. The mission was reviewed and revised concurrently with the creation of the College's current strategic plan, 2020 VISION, and then adopted by the Board of Trustees. The vision statement was adopted in 2010 and in the same year, a comprehensive process revealed the Core Values of the institution.

Three Rivers College fulfills its mission through offering degrees and certificates that lead to employment and/or transfer to other postsecondary institutions and through workforce training. The mission is the defining document of the college and guides all operations and initiatives.

The College Mission is published in a variety of ways to make it clear and known to the public. The Mission is posted to the College Website, published in numerous handbooks; and printed on bi-fold business card size documents for distribution. The College is committed to fulfilling its mission and serving our communities in ways that are true to our Mission and Core Values.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

### 2.A - Core Component 2.A

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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

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All activities and programs at TRC operate with integrity and in an ethical manner. Honesty and integrity are one of the five [Core Values](#) identified at the College. The College has established numerous policies and regulations that address integrity and ethical behavior across the institution.

The Board of Trustees adopted policies that govern their own operations which address their practices ([BP0311 Statement of Practices](#)) and the integrity and ethical behavior of the board ([BP 0340 Code of Ethics](#); [BP 0341 Confidentiality of Student Records](#); [BP 0342 Nepotism](#); [BP 0343 Conflict of Interest](#); [BP 0420 Minutes](#); and [BP 0430 Executive Session](#)).

At the monthly board meeting, the Chief Financial Officer presents a detailed financial report that covers the expenses for the month and year-to-date summaries of all categories of revenue and expenses. Budget adjustments are presented to the Board for approval when actual revenues/expenses vary from those budgeted. Both the [financial report](#) and the [budget adjustments](#) are an action item at the meeting. The Board is responsible for approving the budget and reviews the line item budget prior to approving the budget.

As required by [FP3102 Annual Audit](#), an independent auditor examines the financial records and internal controls of the College annually. Additionally, major federal programs are examined for compliance according to the OMB Compliance Supplement. [Completed audits](#) are published to the [College website](#) upon acceptance by the Board of Trustees.

The Chief Financial Officer is a Certified Public Accountant which requires adherence to the [Professional Code of Conduct](#). In particular, Section 0.300.040 Integrity (p. 5) states, "Integrity is measured in terms of what is right and just."

The Board of Trustees also adopted a number of College policies and regulations designed to ensure integrity and ethical behavior ([FP 3110](#) and [FR 3110 Awards, Gifts, and Prices](#); [FR 3620 Disposal of Surplus Property](#); [FP 3801 Purchasing](#); [FR 3805 Bidding](#)

Thresholds; [FR 3810](#) Purchasing Approvals; [GAP 1160](#) Institutional Review Board; [GAP 1205](#) Code of Ethics; [GAP 1210](#) Civil Rights; [GAP 1410](#) and [GAR 1410](#) Record Retention and Destruction; [ITP 8100](#) and [ITR 8100](#) Acceptable Use; [IP 6710](#) Faculty Rights and Responsibilities; [PP 4860](#) Confidentiality of Personnel Records; and [SP 2415](#) and [SR 2415](#) Confidentiality of Student Records). These policies and regulations are referenced in both the [employee handbook](#) and the [faculty handbook](#) and are posted to the TRC website.

The Missouri Ethics Commission provides guidance for conflicts of interest and personal financial disclosures of public officials, employees, or candidates. The College Board of Trustees re-ratify [BP0343 Conflict of Interest](#) every two years as required. Beyond the trustees, this policy also requires annual personal financial disclosure statements from the College President, Chief Financial Officer, and Director of Purchasing.

All employees are required to participate in [annual training](#) that covers Title IX, FERPA, Workplace Violence, and other topics as appropriate.

The auxiliary functions of the College follow the same rules and standards that apply to all other areas of operations.

## Sources

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- 2.A. Code\_of\_Conduct.AICPA.TRC.pdf
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- 2.A. Core Values
- 2.A. Financial Report
- 2.A. TRC.College\_Website.TRC.pdf
- BP0311-Statement of Practices-FINAL-2016 09 21
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- BP0430-Executive Session-FINAL-2016 09 21
- Employee Handbook
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- FP3110 Awards Gifts and Prize-Binder-CFO - Copy
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- FR3110 Awards Gifts and Prizes-Binder-CFO - Copy
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- FR3805 Bidding Thresholds-Binder-CFO - Copy

- FR3810 Purchasing Approval-Binder-CFO - Copy
- GAP1160 Institutional Review Board-Binder-Chief of Institutional Effectiveness
- GAP1205 Code of Ethics-Binder-President
- GAP1210 Civil Rights-Binder-CSSOandHR
- GAP1410 Record Retention and Destruction-Binder-President and Cabinet Members and HR
- GAR1410 Record Retention and Destruction-Binder-President. Cabinet members.HR
- IP6710 Faculty Rights and Responsibilities-Binder-CAO
- ITP8100 Acceptable Use-Binder1-Chief Technology Officer
- ITR8100 Acceptable Use-Binder-CTO
- PP4860 Confidentiality of Personnel Records-Binder-HR
- SP2415 Confidentiality of Student Records-Binder-CSSO
- SR2415 Confidentiality of Student Records-Binder

## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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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

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TRC communicates clearly and completely with its audiences. Using various media, the College presents its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, and accreditation relationships on its website, [catalog](#), Student [Handbook](#), and in various reports and makes them all publicly available.

The TRC [website](#) is the primary public medium for all audiences, including faculty and staff, and is maintained and updated regularly to ensure that the information is accurate and current in compliance with [GAP 1310](#) and [GAR 1310 College Communications](#). Social media is also regulated by the College to ensure control and clarity of content for our students and the public as found in College regulation [GAR 1315 Social Media](#). Programs of study are published in the catalog on pages [49-160](#) and are available on our website. The Higher Learning Commission's Mark of Affiliation is displayed on the [accreditation page](#) and is linked to the HLC website where the accreditation status of TRC can be seen and may be accessed through Institutional Effectiveness webpage. The [accreditation page](#) also contains information showing third-party accreditation and approval for specific programs. The website also indicates the College's organizational chart making public the oversight of various operations and offices, the institutional budget, and financial statements, costs of attending as well as numerous other documents and information items that clearly depict the College and its programs as shown on the attached [screenshots](#). All content on the website is [reviewed and audited](#) bi-annually. For the review, the Communications Department requests that all content owners review for accuracy the web content for which they are responsible.

Contact information for faculty and staff is located on the website in the [directory](#) and faculty and staff credentials are published in the College catalog on pages [193-197](#) annually.

Policies and Regulations that include requirements to make public and/or post to the College website information related to programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships such as ([GAP 1140](#) and [GAR 1140 Institutional Effectiveness](#); [BP 0411 Meeting Agenda](#); [BP 0420 Minutes](#); [BP 0440 Notice of Board Meetings](#); [FP 3102 Annual Audit](#); [FP 3103 Budget Preparation and Adoption](#); and [SR 2740 Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)).

Accuracy of information published is verified through a multi-step [proofing process](#) to ensure that the information provided to the public is clear and correct.

## Sources

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- 2.B.Proofing Process.TRC.pdf
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- 2.B.TRC.Website
- 2.B.TRC.Website.Screenshots
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- FP3102 Annual Audit-Binder-CFO
- FP3103 Budget Preparation and Adoption-Binder-CFO
- GAP1140 Institutional Effectiveness-Binder-Chief of Institutional Effectiveness
- GAP1310 College Communications-Binder-Communications
- GAR1140 Institutional Effectiveness-Binder-CIEO and President - Copy
- GAR1310 College Communications-Binder-Director of Comm
- GAR1315 Social Media-Binder-Director of Comm
- SR2740 Student Rights and Responsibilities Regulation-Binder
- Student Handbook-2017-2018
- Student Handbook-2017-2018 (page number 2)

## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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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

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(2.C.1.) The TRC Board of Trustees is comprised of six freely elected members representing the four counties in the taxing district of the College as shown in [BP 0320 Board Elections](#).

As outlined in [BP 0310 Board Purpose and Responsibilities](#), the trustees serve the three basic functions: 1. Full legislative authority through the adoption of policy, 2. Executive authority through delegation to the College President and 3. Appraisal authority of the execution of policy through evaluation of College operations as presented by the College President.

The deliberations of the Board of Trustees reflect priorities that enhance and preserve the institution. The board's actions, as outlined in [BP 0311 Statement of Practices](#), keep the educational welfare of the students enrolled at the College the first and greatest concern.

In exercising its authority, the board approves policy, the annual College budget, tuition changes, and other matters deemed appropriate as evidenced through [board minutes](#). The key documents that guide the operations of the College are the [College Mission](#), strategic plan, [2020 Vision](#), and the annual budget, all of which are [board approved](#). Additionally, the board evaluates the College President annually.

(2.C.2.) As [elected representatives](#), the reasonable and relevant interests of both internal and external constituencies are always considered during the decision-making process of the board.

The TRC board meets monthly and the meetings are open to the public and recorded in digital video [BP 0410 Trustee Meetings](#). The agenda for the meeting is published in advance and members of the public may request agenda items be placed before the board and may participate in meetings [BP 0410 Trustee Meetings](#), [BP 0412 Participation](#)

[by the Public](#), [BP 0411 Meeting Agenda](#). Closed meetings are only held as authorized under the Missouri Sunshine Law [BP 0430 Executive Session](#).

The Board Meeting Books, Board Minutes, Meeting Schedule, and the Board Meeting Videos are all posted to the College website on the [Board of Trustee page](#).

(2.C.3.) The TRC Board of Trustees as [elected representatives](#), are subject to a number of statutes to ensure their independence. The College Board has also adopted policy [BP 0311 Statement of Practices](#) stating that the authority of the board is a group authority, that conflicts of interest shall be avoided, and that they may not solicit or accept gifts, payments, or anything greater than a nominal value defined herein as \$25.00 from any person, organization, group, or entity doing business or desiring to do business with the College.

(2.C.4.) As outlined in [BP 0310 Board Purpose and Responsibilities](#), the trustees serve the three basic functions: 1. Full legislative authority through the adoption of policy, 2. Executive authority through delegation to the College President and 3. Appraisal authority of the execution of policy through evaluation of College operations as presented by the College President. [BP 0311 Statement of Practices](#) states that "Trustees shall work cooperatively to establish effective College policies and to delegate authority for the implementation and administration of those policies to the College President. Members shall not attempt to by-pass, undermine, or usurp the President's authority and responsibility for the daily operation of the College". [Board meeting minutes](#) and approved policies show the Board of Trustees has appropriately delegated the duties of the day-to-day operation to the College President. Faculty oversight of academic matters is covered under Criterion 3.

## Sources

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- 2.C.1.Board Approved
- 2.C.1.Board Minutes
- 2.C.2.BOT Page
- 2.C.4.Board Meeting Minutes
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- BP0320-Board Elections-FINAL-2016 09 21
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- BP0412-Participation by the Public-FINAL-2016 09 21
- BP0430-Executive Session-FINAL-2016 09 21

## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

### Argument

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Three Rivers College demonstrates a commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning as evidenced through institutional statements and adopted policies, support for innovation, and teaching and learning opportunities offered to faculty and students. The College's position on academic freedom is based on the interpretive statements on academic freedom from the "1940 Statement of Principles" of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in April 1970 and endorsed by the Fifty-Sixth Annual Meeting as Association Policy, which were further revised in 1977, [IP 6112 Academic Freedom, para. 1.](#)

The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. TRC supports the ideas of free and open expression for faculty, staff, and students and supports those rights through policy and regulation, [GAP 1201](#) and [GAR 1201 Free Speech and Assembly.](#)

Three Rivers College values and encourages faculty members to pursue open and frank dialogue with students by affirming that institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual faculty member or the institution as a whole. Academic freedom is fundamental to the protection of the rights of the faculty member in teaching and the rights of the student to freedom in learning, [IP 6112 Academic Freedom, para. 1.](#)

Further, with respect to creative activity, research, and the publication of the results, faculty should follow prescribed procedures approved by the institution. The faculty are also encouraged to develop as well as research in areas of interest, [IR6750 Intellectual Property.](#) In the classroom, faculty are not discouraged from pursuing controversial dialogue, however, topics should be related to subject matter, [IP 6112 Academic Freedom, para. 2.](#)

Faculty determine curriculum for courses and programs. One of their primary responsibilities as a faculty member is to determine course content, course and program Student Learning Outcomes, and how best to achieve those outcomes. Faculty serve on the [Curriculum Committee](#), a standing College committee as indicated in the [Faculty Bylaws](#), and as part of a review and approval process outlined in [IR 6211 Curriculum Development.](#) The faculty at-large approve all curriculum.

Faculty are actively engaged in developing their skills and own education. The Faculty Engagement Process, used also as part of the [faculty rank and promotion](#)

[process](#), encourages faculty collaboration through quality circles, community involvement, professional development, and service to the College, [Faculty Engagement/Evaluation](#).

Faculty and staff are also involved and encouraged to be active in continuing to develop and encourage students to pursue learning and development opportunities. The Student Government Association (SGA) acts as a liaison between students and the College's faculty and administration. Through SGA, students can express themselves collectively in coordinating student activities and making recommendations to College Cabinet on matters that benefit the student body, the College, or community.

Three Rivers College also has an active Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) chapter. PTK's purpose is to recognize and encourage scholarship and service, develop character and leadership, and cultivate fellowship. Members have opportunities for hands-on leadership experience by planning and implementing chapter activities. As another example, students in Three Rivers College DECA organization for marketing and business have won top honors at state and national competitions. Three Rivers College supports [DECA students and sponsors](#).

Finally, students are provided the opportunity to express their creativity and explore the arts through campus and community art exhibitions, poetry readings, and musical and theatrical performances. Additionally, faculty, staff, and students are all encouraged to participate in the award-winning publication, *Confluence*.

## Sources

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- IR6740 Faculty Rank and Promotion-Binder-CAO
- IR6750 Intellectual Property-Binder-CAO

## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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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

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(2.E.1) The Three Rivers College Institutional Review Board (IRB), which resides with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, is in compliance with Federal and State law. The IRB provides oversight and makes approval decisions on research activity to ensure the integrity of the research conducted by the College and research by outside parties using the College as a subject [GAP 1160](#) and [GAR 1160 Institutional Review Board](#). The Office of Institutional Effectiveness is responsible for the management of the Institutional Review Board and oversight of research activities. Also reference [IR 6750 Intellectual Property](#).

(2.E.2.) TRC students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources, and the College enforces this value through the Student Code of Conduct in [College Regulation SR2610](#). Students are provided a general statement regarding academic honesty provided in the Master Course Syllabus Template as shown in [Addendum C of IR 6211 Curriculum Development](#). The statement provides a basic expectation that one represents his or her own work as integrity is essential for academic work.

*Three Rivers College requires that students adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Students are entrusted to be honest in every phase of their academic life and to present as their own work only that which is genuinely theirs. Cheating, plagiarism, violation of test conditions, complicity in dishonest behavior, or other falsification of academic work is a serious breach of College standards ([Addendum C of IR 6211 Curriculum Development](#)).*

Instruction regarding the ethical use of information can be found in numerous courses. [ENGL 111 College Writing](#) and [GOVT 121 National and State Government](#) are examples of entry level-required courses for all degrees. Plagiarism and its consequences are discussed. Students are provided opportunities for discussion, links to videos, and examples of plagiarism to ensure students do not make these errors. [ENGL 112 Advanced College Writing](#) also addresses plagiarism, academic integrity, and writing exercises to develop student understanding on evaluating and using sources and how to cite them appropriately.

ENGL 111 uses [SafeAssign](#), a tool in the Blackboard LMS, which checks the content of essays against both online sources and other writing assignments submitted to Blackboard. The tool identifies areas where language, syntax, and organization appear to mirror other sources. The program results give the instructor an overall plagiarism assessment, and identifies and evaluates specific sentences and passages for similar or identical content. Where the content of a student's essay matches a website, the tool provides a link to that website. Where the content matches another student's work submitted to Blackboard, the tool notes that the passage appears in "another student's essay". When that other student is also a TRC student, instructors are able to access that work for comparison, even if the essay was turned into Blackboard in another section or several semesters in the past.

Rutland Library staff interacts with students frequently to guide them in the ethical use of information resources. The library staff's best opportunity to impact students' behavior regarding ethical use of information occurs when instructors request, and staff provide, Information Literacy Sessions to students enrolled in their classes. Classes taking advantage of these basic sessions usually include, but are not limited to: ACAD classes, remedial and lower-level English classes, speech classes, and any other classes deemed by the instructor as necessary for the fundamental use of the library. ([Literacy Session Outline](#))

(2.E.3) Three Rivers College faculty, staff, and students are held to standards of honesty and integrity through various policies, regulations, and practices. [GAP 1205 Code of Ethics](#) define expectations regarding professional standards for faculty and staff.

The Student Code of Conduct policy and regulation, [SP 2610](#) and [SR 2610 Student Code of Conduct](#) respectively demonstrates to students the appropriate conduct and ethical application of knowledge expected from Three Rivers College's students. The Student Code of Conduct is located on the College website, in the [Faculty Handbook](#), and the [Student Handbook](#). Each course syllabus contains a statement concerning academic honesty ([IR 6211 Curriculum Development Addendum C - Master Course Syllabus Template, p. 11](#)).

Disciplinary actions for violations of the above policies and regulations are administered in accordance with student policy [SP 2620 Disciplinary Proceedings](#) and College Regulation [SR 2620 Disciplinary Proceedings](#).

When an instance of academic dishonesty occurs:

1. The initial notification of the incident from the instructor is received by the Dean of Student Services either through email or a fillable incident form found on the web site. A narrative of the incident and any supporting documentation will accompany the email or incident form. The step-by-step process is listed in [SR2620 Disciplinary Proceedings](#) pages 3-7 within the regulation.
2. The student has the right to appeal as outlined in [SR 2140](#).

Examples have been documented in the appropriate offices showing instances of students being sanctioned for violating the academic honesty section of the student code of conduct. One such [example](#), with all identifying information redacted, shows a student being sanctioned for violations of academic honesty.

## Sources

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- 2.E.2.ENGL112 Advanced College Writing
- 2.E.2.GOV 121 National and State Government
- 2.E.2.Literacy Session Outline
- 2.E.2.SafeAssign
- 2.E.3. Academic Honesty Example.TRC.pdf
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- IR6750 Intellectual Property-Binder-CAO
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- SP2620 Disciplinary Proceedings -Binder-CSSO
- SR2140 Student Appeals-Binder
- SR2610 Student Code of Conduct-Binder
- SR2610 Student Code of Conduct-Binder (page number 2)
- SR2620 Disciplinary Proceedings-Binder
- Student Handbook-2017-2018

## **2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

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Three Rivers College operates and serves with integrity. The Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff are urged to abide by professional standards and our students are instructed in the principles and importance of academic integrity. Policies, regulations and procedures have been operationalized as part of a continuous effort to promote and ensure academic quality and fiscal accountability.

The argument and documents presented herein show the College's efforts to ensure academic quality and excellent service to our students.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

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

### 3.A - Core Component 3.A

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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

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(3.A.1) The courses and programs offered by TRC are current and require appropriate levels of student performance for the degree and certificates awarded. TRC offers the Associate of Arts (AA), the Associate of Science (AS), and the Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT), which are designed as transfer programs. The Associate of Applied Science (AAS), which is designed as a terminal degree, may also include both stand alone and embedded certificates. All degree programs require at least 60 semester credit hours for completion. The requirements for all degrees and certificates are outlined in the College Catalog on pages [42-160](#) with [updates and changes](#) made annually through the College's curriculum and instruction review process identified in [IP 6210](#) and [IR 6211](#). Prior to publication, the College Catalog is reviewed by faculty and department leadership to ensure the information published is accurate and current. The most current version of the [College Catalog](#) is found on the [College's website](#) in accordance with [IP 6107 College Catalog](#). All program and course content and learning outcomes are consistent across all modes of delivery.

(3.A.2) The College's overarching educational goals are articulated on [pages 42-43](#) of the College Catalog where the graduation requirements for the various degrees and certificates are provided. Here current and prospective students begin to see the differences in length and requirement for the various degrees and certificates.

All associate degrees designed for transfer require the completion of forty-two hour of general education courses as outlined on [page 44](#) of the College Catalog and all terminal associate degrees require at least 25% of the coursework required for the degree to be general education as outlined on [page 45](#) of the College Catalog. The remainder of required credits for each program of study leading to a degree are outlined in the catalog on pages [49-160](#).

Pages [44-45](#) in the College Catalog identify the 42-hour state-mandated General Education (Gen Ed) Requirements and the Associate of Applied Science Degree General Education Requirements. The General Education requirements for students completing the AA and the AAT are as follows: Communications (9 hours); Valuing (3 hours); Humanities (9 hours); Life and Physical Sciences (8-10 hours); Mathematics (3 hours); Social and Behavioral Sciences (9 hours); and the General Education Capstone (1 hour). The AAS degree has Communications (3 hours); Social Sciences (3 hours); Mathematics (3-4 hours); and Critical Thinking (6 hours).

General Education and content specific requirements for associate and certificate degrees are listed on the College website and in the catalog. AA and AAS degree completion requires between 60-65 credit hours, one-year certificates require between 24-30 credit hours, and short term certificates require 9-18 credit hours. For example, the AA with a program of study in General Education requires ([page 49](#) Catalog) between 60-65 hours.

TRC certificate programs require between 9 and 62 credit hours to complete. Certificates are designed to provide a specific set of skills for employment, designate a specialized area of study, or serve as advanced credentials for students. Most certificates at TRC are designed as part of a more extensive program and can be stacked to lead to an associate level program. The requirements for all certificates are outlined on pages [49-160](#) of the College Catalog.

Courses and programs of Three Rivers College are [kept current and improved](#) through the various channels for faculty to [conduct assessment](#), provide input, and exercise authority over curriculum and academic policies.

All career degree programs are established and maintained with employer [advisory committees](#) which provide input regarding the competencies required for graduates to be successful in the workplace. In addition to gathering required workplace skills and competencies, faculty program managers meet with their [program advisory committees](#) to [review the quality](#) of student performance, industry standard updates, new advances in technology specific to the local labor market and make changes as necessary to maintain currency.

Curriculum changes are initiated by faculty, as shown in [IP 6210](#) Curriculum Development and [IR 6211 Curriculum Development](#), and submitted to the Department Chairs for review. After curriculum changes have been reviewed by the Department Chairs, proposed curriculum changes are moved forward to the Dean of Instruction and Dean of

Institutional Effectiveness. The Deans ensure curriculum changes [have the necessary action plan and assessment plan](#) in place and ensure the changes have been captured in the electronic planning system, Strategic Planning Online (SPOL). Once the Deans have reviewed, the changes are submitted to the College Curriculum Committee.

The College Curriculum Committee is comprised of faculty as outlined in the [IR 6730 Faculty By-Laws](#) (pp. 9-11) and staff members from the various departments within the College. The Curriculum Committee is chaired by the Dean of Instruction with faculty serving as voting members. The Registrar, System Administrator, Director of Retail Operations, Director of Enrollment Services and Student Development, Dean of Student Services, and the Executive Assistant to the CAO serve as ex-officio non-voting members ([Approved Curriculum Minutes](#)). Program and course additions, changes, and deletions are initiated and completed by faculty who must address the effects of curricular changes on other academic areas of the College.

All courses that are used to meet graduation requirements for an associate degree must be college level and no developmental, remedial, or transitional courses may be applied to satisfy degree requirements.

(3.A.3.) TRC uses several methods to ensure the institution's quality and learning goals are consistent across [all modes of delivery](#) and all locations. A Master Course Syllabus has been developed for every course, regardless of modality or location, and is housed in the Office of the Dean of Instruction. Each Master Course Syllabus was developed from a Master Syllabus Template included as [Addendum C](#) of IR 6211 Curriculum Development. This Master Syllabus Template is used to maintain uniform structure in the development of course syllabi across all disciplines and modalities for each course. The resultant Master Course Syllabus for the course contains, as a required item, the course description and the student learning outcomes for the course. All TRC faculty are required to use the [Master Course Syllabus](#) when developing individual course syllabi regardless of modality or location, thereby ensuring uniform Course Student Learning Outcomes, Course Descriptions, and other required information. While faculty may enhance and individualize syllabi, the master syllabus outlines items that must come directly from the master course syllabus including Course Descriptions and course Student Learning Outcomes. All faculty are required to submit their course syllabi each semester for review by the Department Chair to ensure consistency.

Full time faculty serve as mentors to adjuncts within their discipline and are responsible for communicating with adjuncts the course and programmatic learning outcomes, assessment rubrics and methodology, and content of the course. Each year an [Adjunct Professional Development Day](#) is held where full time faculty and adjuncts are given opportunities to work together to discuss coursework and expectations.

Several departments have created [Blackboard repositories](#) to share common learning materials, syllabi, assignments, assessment rubrics, and other resources to be used in the classroom.

Three Rivers offers courses in a variety of formats to include: online, hybrid, ITV and face-to-face. Distance Learning courses must meet the same requirements and quality standards as those offered in the classroom setting as stated in [IP 6510 Distance Learning](#). Several processes have been implemented to ensure quality and consistency across these modalities to include:

All faculty teaching online courses, whether full-time or adjunct, are required to have successfully completed a [Quality Matters \(QM\) online training](#) prior to being scheduled to teach a course online.

Every Online course must go through a development process which requires the submission of both a course [framework](#) showing how Quality Matters Standards are being met and a [Time on Task Credit](#) Hour Distribution showing how instructional time is being met. Once these have been submitted and approved, the course is [peer reviewed](#) by two peers (not necessarily in the discipline) to ensure QM standards have been met. Any standards not met are documented and the instructor notes how the course is changed to meet the missing requirement which is then indicated on the [Essentials and Very Important Standards](#) worksheet for faculty.

Online course shells have been created by faculty that have successfully completed the QM Applying the Rubric training. Once reviewed and identified as meeting the QM standards, the course becomes the course shell used by all faculty teaching the course online. The [basic navigation framework](#) for online courses has been developed and [approved by the faculty](#) and is used in all online courses, adding commonality among online courses. Blackboard Coordinator login credentials have been created for Department Chairs, reviewers and course leads, to allow for a review of courses to ensure all courses meet the same course student learning outcomes. Assessment of distance learning courses [are included](#) in the college-wide assessment process.

Oversight at Three Rivers is provided for instruction by the Department Chairs, and each are responsible to administer the instruction of the College's external locations educational programs in several ways. All instructors, both on and off the Poplar Bluff campus, are required to submit current course syllabi that are first reviewed by Department Chairs and then reviewed and stored with the chairs and the Dean of Instruction (CAO). All course syllabi must meet the standards as established by the full time faculty. Likewise, the textbooks that are used in the external locations are the same texts, and same editions, as those on main campus. All External Location Directors attend a [Semester Debrief Meeting](#) with the College Cabinet each semester.

External locations also share institutional policies, SLOs and student policies as well as those for faculty and staff. For example, the College's student complaint process is the same on and off the main campus. External Location Directors attend employee meetings to keep current on College policies and procedures and carry this information back to their respective locations. In addition, external location directors have monthly meetings and have established close working relationships with their respective Department Chairs and faculty, often communicating with them several times a week. A representative

External Location Director is a member of the College Cabinet and is responsible for communicating College updates to all locations.

Both personnel and the College's academic structure provide oversight and consistency for the various programs offered at external locations. General oversight is provided by the appropriate director, faculty and Department Chairs. Since external locations teaching faculty are primarily adjuncts, the department chairs supervise those faculty and their content areas. In addition, student course evaluations and surveys are given on a regular basis to assure quality control at all locations.

Degree programs at [external locations](#) are monitored through the Department Chairs offices and a lead program faculty member provides oversight. Semester schedules have a timeline that all locations must adhere to, and registration dates and deadlines are the same at all locations with the exception of the Cape Center Consortium. External Location Directors collaborate to plan schedules. Since the directors at external locations work with their advising staff to assist students with creating their degree plans, they are actively involved to ensure their students have the courses they need.

Faculty at all locations are equally qualified and are credentialed using the same process. The Directors at external locations are the ones who often find prospective adjuncts who, in turn, send in their qualifications and credentials to the Department Chairs and the Office of Human Resources. Faculty, at all locations, have a consistent understanding of their role, often travel to attend meetings on the Poplar Bluff Campus, and external location staff attend meetings that are webcasted to all locations.

## Sources

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- 3.A.3.Approved Curriculum Minutes
- 3.A.3.Basic Navigation Framework
- 3.A.3.Blackboard Repository
- 3.A.3.Essentials and Very Important Standards Worksheet for Faculty
- 3.A.3.Framework.TRC.pdf
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- College-Wide Outcomes Assessment Report 2016 - 2017 PUB.pdf
- Distance Learning Assessment Report 2016-2017
- Examples of Curriculum Improvements
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- IP6510 Distance Learning-Binder-CAO
- IR6211 Curriculum Development-Binder-CAO
- IR6211 Curriculum Development-Binder-CAO (page number 10)
- IR6520 Online Learning-Binder-CAO
- IR6730 Faculty ByLaws-Binder-CAO
- IR6730 Faculty ByLaws-Binder-CAO (page number 12)
- Multi\_Location\_Visit\_-\_Reviewer\_Analysis
- Program Review Summary Reports.2016.2017

## 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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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

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(3.B.1.) The general education curriculum at TRC is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels offered and provides a broad-based student learning experience designed to achieve the College-wide Outcomes developed and adopted by the faculty.

The College SLOs describe the Knowledge, Skills, Behaviors, and Abilities (KSBAs) intended for students graduating with the Associate Degree to master in addition to the programmatic outcomes of their program of study.

(3.B.2.) Three Rivers College engages in institution-wide, systematic, and continuous improvement through the [assessment](#) of the effectiveness of the institution by all academic units, as guided by the strategic plan. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness facilitates college-wide assessment processes. These outcomes are assessed by faculty through an ongoing process. Assessment occurs at the course, department, and institution level as described in the [Institutional Effectiveness Manual](#). All students completing an associate degree are expected to meet prescribed general education outcomes.

The Four College-wide Outcomes are:

- Communication Fluency – The student will effectively communicate ideas that are clear and coherent.
- Critical Thinking – The student will analyze evidence and assumptions to formulate informed judgments and solutions.
- Cultural Awareness – The student will identify and analyze one's own culture, the culture of others, and examine the relationship and interactions among different cultures.
- Information Literacy – The student will access and use information from multiple sources while evaluating their accuracy and credibility.

The Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degrees include forty-two hours of general education coursework and are consistent with the forty-two hour, state-mandated, general education curriculum distributed across the areas of communications, humanities, social and behavioral sciences, physical and biological sciences, and mathematics. The Associate of Science (AS) degree is designed to transfer to specific programs at four-year institutions and generally contains heavier concentrations of general education in math and science as required by the field. Examples would include the Forestry AS ([page 68](#), College Catalog) which includes general education courses in communications, social and behavioral sciences, physical sciences, and mathematics while other AS degrees, such as Administration of Justice, may include a Humanities elective ([see p. 86](#), College Catalog). The Associate of Applied Science (AAS) requires a minimum of 15 hours of general education courses from the areas of Communications, Social Science, Mathematics, and Critical Thinking as described on [page 45](#) of the College catalog.

(3.B.3.) The College-wide Outcomes of [Communication Fluency](#), [Critical Thinking](#), [Information Literacy](#), and [Cultural Awareness](#) provide the basis for student learning at the institution. Faculty evaluate student learning on an ongoing basis to determine the students' abilities to collect and analyze information, communicate information, modes of inquiry or creative work, and developing skills for changing environments. These outcomes are assessed across the General Education curriculum on a cycle created as part of a recent HLC quality initiative using methods appropriate to the discipline to support each general education requirement as shown in the [Institutional Effectiveness Manual](#).

The general education and programmatic courses challenge students to collect, analyze, and communicate information on a regular basis. Two relevant examples would be the [Social Sciences Common Assessments](#) and the research paper in [ENGL 112: Advanced College Writing](#) both of which require students to collect, analyze and communicate information.

(3.B.4.) TRC provides opportunities for students to learn about and engage in cultures and civilizations. The faculty adopted Cultural Awareness as one of the College-wide Outcomes. To measure student learning in this area, faculty were involved in the creation and adoption of the [Cultural Awareness Rubric](#).

Several courses of the general education curriculum speak directly to expanding students' knowledge with regard to other cultures. Those courses include: World Civilization to/since the Renaissance (HIST 121/122); World Foods and Society (AGRI 190); History and Appreciation of Art, Music, Theater, and Film (ARTS 123, MUSC 123, THEA 120, THEA 122); Environmental Science (BIOL 102); World Literature to/since 1600 (ENGL 221/222); Classical Mythology (ENGL 223); Regional Geography of the Eastern and Western World (GEOG 111/112); International Relations (GOVT 223); Seminar in Global Studies (GLBL 120); Introduction to Philosophy (PHIL 200); Religions of the World (PHIL 243); General Sociology (SOC 111); Race and Ethnicity (SOC 221); and Elementary and Intermediate Spanish (SPAN 101/102/201/202) as evidenced by course descriptions on pages [163-192](#) of the College Catalog.

One example of cultural diversity comes from [General Sociology \(SOC 111\)](#) where students apply their knowledge of the terms ethnocentrism and cultural relativism in food customs; the death rituals of the Malagasy; and recognition of subcultures within their own society. In another example from [Race and Ethnicity \(SOC 221\)](#) students examine issues focusing on race and ethnic groups in America. [Religions of the World \(PHIL 243\)](#) allows intellectual discovery of various religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity and challenges students about their preconceived ideas with respect to these religions. Each of these courses contain [specific assignments](#) designed to address human diversity. The Social Science department also made assignments in their primary general education courses (GOVT 121, HIST 111/112, PSYC 111, SOC 111) to ensure students would be exposed to the concept.

(3.B.5.) The College encourages faculty to engage in scholarship, creative work, and discovery of knowledge outside the classroom as well. [Center Stage](#), the College and community Theatre Company, offers creative opportunities and cultural experiences. Members of the English faculty participate in "Big G's Open-mic [Poetry Slam](#)" annually, and a lecture on the recent [eclipse event](#), followed by a "viewing party" sponsored by Student Life and conducted by the Science Department. Members from STEM fields also participate in another annual event, "[Big Bang Theory for Girls.](#)" Faculty members work with young women from the College's service area to encourage them to consider STEM fields as possible career paths. Faculty and staff work with the [Boys and Girls Club](#) with creative and scholarly activities to encourage and engage middle-to high-school age students.

## Sources

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- 2017-2018 College Catalog with Addendum (page number 50)
- 2017-2018 College Catalog with Addendum (page number 79)

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- 3.B.5.Poetry\_Slam.TRC.pdf
- College-Wide Outcomes Assessment Report 2016 - 2017 PUB.pdf
- Communication Fluency - Final 2016
- Critical Thinking Rubric - Final 2016
- Information Literacy - Final
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## 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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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

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(3.C.1) TRC employs sufficient faculty to carry out both their classroom and non-classroom roles. As shown on pages [39-40](#) of the 2017 College Factbook, TRC employs 67 full-time and 130 part-time faculty. As a community college, the primary responsibility of faculty is teaching and advising students, with no expectation of research. Full-time faculty are required to teach a minimum of 15 credit hours each semester and maintain 10 office hours, with the remainder of the work week being spent preparing for classes, participating in committee assignments, advising students and participating in learning assessment as outlined in [IR 6720 Faculty Workload](#) and [PR 4210 Work Hours of Employment](#). As outlined in [PR 4210 Work Hours of Employment](#), adjunct faculty are limited to 12 credit hours maximum of instruction during the fall and spring. In Fall 17 and Spring 18, 55% and 60% of students were taught by full time faculty respectively and the average class size ranged between 12 and 15 students.

The average years of service for full-time faculty is 11 years. 44% of faculty members have greater than 10 years of service to the institution. The College faculty turnover rate is relatively low indicating they remain as shown by the years of service as demonstrated by the [Full-time Faculty Years of Service](#) and the [Full-time Faculty Turnover](#).

(3.C.2.) TRC employs competent faculty qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the College with appropriate credentials from an accredited institution for their position.

As outlined in [IP6120](#) and [IR6120 Faculty Credentialing](#), general education faculty must have a minimum of a master's degree with eighteen graduate hours in the content area or a master's degree with an additional eighteen hours of discipline specific graduate work. Career and Technical Education faculty must have at least a bachelor's degree but may have a combination of academic credentials, appropriate certificates in their field, verification of related occupational experience obtained within the most recent ten years or a state teaching certification in the area to be taught. All faculty teaching dual credit courses must have credentials equivalent to faculty teaching on-campus courses; however, TRC has been granted a [Dual Credit Extension](#) by HLC. All dual credit faculty not meeting credentialing requirements are on a [recovery contract](#).

A thorough [credentialing process](#) ensures all faculty are appropriately [credentialed](#). A [Faculty Credentialing Form](#) is completed by the Department Chair and submitted to the Chief Academic Officer with documentation for review and approval. The president of the institution must grant final approval of credentials and initial the Faculty Credentialing Form for an application to be complete.

Once a faculty member's credentials to teach a specific course or discipline have been approved following [IP6120](#) and [IR6120 Faculty Credentialing](#), the information is uploaded into the credentialing module of Strategic Planning Online (SPOL). All credentialing documents and the printed [credentialing certificate](#) are sent to HR for the official file. Electronic copies of supporting documentation, the faculty credentialing certification, and credentialing roster for [Fall 2017](#) and [Spring 2018](#) are [all contained and maintained in SPOL](#).

Each semester, a report showing any inconsistencies between faculty teaching assigned courses and the courses for which they are credentialed is created to ensure all courses are taught by credentialed faculty. Faculty teaching online [require additional QM Training](#) which is also [documented](#) in their [online credentialing file](#).

(3.C.3) All faculty are evaluated each year. The Faculty Evaluation and Engagement Process is detailed in [IR 6715 Faculty Evaluation and Engagement](#). Based on feedback from the faculty expressing dissatisfaction with the previous evaluation process, the [faculty created and approved](#) current evaluation and engagement process as described in the regulation. During this process, the faculty determined 28 items that defined the role of a faculty member to be used for the annual evaluation. Beyond the 28 minimum items the faculty determined that an engagement process be created to determine levels of engagement tied to an incentive system. Annually, the [Department Chair reviews](#) the 28 minimum expectations with the faculty using [student opinion surveys](#) (conducted through *CourseEval*), [classroom observations](#), work history for the year, and faculty's self-report for meeting expectations to evaluate the faculty at the conclusion of each calendar year. For the faculty that choose to pursue the engagement process, the Chair reviews the faculty member's tasks and supporting documentation to award points. For any area that the faculty member believes was not correctly evaluated, an appeal process is in place ([see p. 7 IR 6715](#)). The evaluation is documented and retained in the permanent file in HR. Annual evaluations of [adjunct faculty](#), which covers 18 of the 28

minimum expectation requirements, consist of a classroom observation by either the chair or member of the full-time faculty in the discipline with feedback to the adjunct.

(3.C.4) Keeping faculty current, proficient, and effective within their teaching role is a priority. All new personnel must complete [orientation](#) training where they receive professional development about numerous topics including FERPA, Title IX, and Drug and Alcohol Prevention.

Continued professional development is strongly encouraged and [budgeted](#) by TRC to encourage faculty to pursue professional growth opportunities such as internal training, webinars and discipline-specific conferences. Many of TRC's Professional Development events and activities are highlighted in the Focus on Learning Publications for [2013](#), [2014](#), [2015](#) and [2016](#).

Significant [internal professional development opportunities](#) are provided starting with the annual [convocation week](#). Many of the activities are designed to provide faculty opportunities to refresh their knowledge regarding [BlackBoard or SoftChalk](#). All full and part-time Faculty are provided opportunities through webinars such as [Go2Knowledge](#), which provides development opportunities in over [6 different categories](#), and [Project TEACH](#). To ensure comparable experiences and quality of instruction, all adjunct faculty are invited to participate in [Adjunct Professional Development Day](#).

One significant example of professional development arose from data that formed the basis for the [Federal Title III, Strengthening Institutions Grant](#), in which findings showed low student persistence and success rates in online gateway courses as compared to face-to-face instruction. To increase student persistence and success in online classes, TRC began to have every instructor teaching online go through [Quality Matters Training](#). The adoption of [Quality Matters \(QM\)](#) has led to six courses being reviewed nationally and every course either being redesigned to the QM standard or in the process of being redesigned. Fall 2017 data from the courses that have been reviewed nationally by a Quality Matters team indicates that reviewed courses have greatly improved [Persistence and Successful Completion Rates](#).

The College has also supported faculty professional development through attendance at conferences. In April 2017, Three Rivers College hosted the Missouri Math Association of Two Year Colleges ([MOMATYC](#)) annual conference. Math faculty from across the state came to the event to network and share best practices. Other professional development opportunities have occurred through various conferences and locations as indicated in the [T3 Budget Worksheet](#).

Another way Three Rivers College promotes professional development is through the College's standing committees as evidenced in [IR 6730 Faculty Bylaws](#) and through the faculty engagement process outlined in [IR 6715](#). This provides faculty the opportunity to become well-versed in multiple facets of their role as a faculty member.

(3.C.5) All TRC faculty are available outside the classroom for student inquiry. All full-time faculty, regardless of delivery modality of instruction, are required to maintain 10 hours of [office hours](#) per [IP 6710 Faculty Rights and Responsibilities](#), [IR 6720 Faculty Workload](#), and [PR 4210 Work Hours of Employment](#). Faculty are required to respond to students within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours on the weekend per page 2, [IR 6720 Faculty Workload](#). Whenever faculty are available students are encouraged to seek out faculty for assistance. All faculty are available to students via email outside posted office hours. Contact information for faculty is posted to the [College website](#), [in the LMS](#), in the [syllabus](#), and at the office of each faculty member.

(3.C.6) The Three Rivers College, 2020 VISION Strategic Theme - [Team Member Development](#): The College will build a team of highly skilled and trained individuals leading to an improved student learning culture, excellent services and more efficient operations; ensures an ongoing focus on appropriately qualified and trained faculty and staff who are supported in their professional development. TRC staff working in the area of [student support services](#) are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development. [PR 4170 College Hiring Procedure](#) is designed to ensure staff are appropriately qualified when hired. [Job descriptions](#), housed in Human Resources, contain the essential functions for the position as well as the minimum qualifications used in the review process. All employees participate in an eight (8) session [Orientation](#) program to provide training and ensure appropriate knowledge of College operations.

TRC Advisors are trained in using the [Advising Manual](#) and the [Student Planning Portal](#). All staff are provided professional development during the [annual convocation](#). Special training sessions are ongoing with academic program faculty to review specific programming with advisors to increase knowledge and ensure proper student guidance and scheduling. Additionally, all staff are provided online [annual training](#) opportunities on topics such as [FERPA](#), [Discrimination Awareness](#), and [Title IX](#) as well as, student services training during the summer months to provide information regarding College services.

College tutors in the Tutor and Learning Center (TLC) must attend training developed by the tutoring staff to become a [certified tutoring center](#) recognized by the College Reading and Learning Association. The [TLC Tutor Manual](#) is utilized to train tutors. The Disability Services staff attend [professional development](#) to stay informed regarding compliance and [best practices](#) to provide our students with the best available opportunities.

Staff and students in the ACHIEVE Program (TRiO SSS) receive specialized training and support for their positions through Federal Grant activities as well as in-house developed training and guides. For example the [Complete Learning Coaches Guide](#), the [Peer Mentoring Program Manual](#), the [People to People Guide](#), and the [ACHIEVE Manual](#) all provide training, guidelines, and operational materials.

Staff members utilize [Go2Knowledge](#), which provides training in six areas with 100 training courses available and all full-time employees are eligible for tuition remission per [page 4 of PR 4510](#) Benefits. Our partnership with four year institutions on campus allow

our benefit eligible staff to continue education beyond Three Rivers College at a significantly reduced rate.

Through the College's budgeting process, funds are allocated for travel and professional development specific to each area of service and demonstrated in [professional development budget by department](#). Relevant training allows departments to stay current with trends and best practices, as well as state and federal regulations through webinars, conferences and specialty training. Finally, many professional development activities are highlighted in the TRC publication of [Focus on Learning](#).

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## 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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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

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(3.D.1) TRC provides student support services designed to meet the needs of our new, current, and prospective students. Students have the ability to access services in a variety of methods, including in person, phone, e-mail, and online. Services provided include the following:

Enrollment Services - helps [students](#) with [application for admission](#), advising, and [registration](#). The advising center uses a personal, seamless and intentional (PSI) process. External Location personnel are trained to provide advisement. Advising is aided by our Colleague integrated [student planning software](#) that provides future semester planning. Results from Student Registration Surveys were used in developing the PSI Advising Model, as covered in 3.D.3.

[Financial Aid Services](#) are provided in person and via the webpage, phone or email. Financial Aid options can be viewed on the [Financial Aid Webpage](#). Numerous services, and [scholarships](#) are offered including specialized services for military [veterans](#). More information can be found in [SR 2740 Students Rights and Responsibilities](#).

[The TRC Testing Services](#) is a Nationally Accredited Testing Center. The placement test, Accuplacer, can be taken at the testing center, External Locations and regional high schools. Other tests offered through Testing Service are HiSET (High School Equivalency Test), CLEP, Health Science Entrance exams, MoGEA, Technical Skills Assessment, Certification Testing, and proctoring services.

[The Rutland Library](#) provides outreach and supports student learning to enhance information literacy and use of the [online resources](#). Each semester the Library provides [numerous workshops](#) to support students' [understanding of the use of library resources](#) at all TRC locations. The main TRC Library is located in the center of the Poplar Bluff campus. The 14,000 square ft. library houses [a collection](#) of nearly 15,000 books, 1500 videos, and over 200,000 electronic books and journals carefully reviewed and selected to support the instructional offerings of the College. Over the last five years, \$274,000.00 has been strategically invested to improve the physical holdings of the library in support of instruction.

The [Registrar](#) houses all student records, evaluates transcripts, helps students when changing degree programs and processes transcript requests, graduation processing and diplomas.

Student Accounts – handles payments on account, payment plans, billing, refunds, and tax documentation (1098T's) for all TRC students and manages the [Raider OneCard Program](#).

[Disability Services](#)- provides [Disability Accommodations](#) to [self-reporting](#) students as outlined in the [brochure](#) and [Disability Services Manual](#).

Tutoring and Learning Center (TLC)– the TLC, is located on the second floor of the Academic Resource Commons (ARC) and Library, provides professional tutoring and is CRLA certified. [Tutoring](#) is predominately provided in English and mathematics, other subjects are available on a limited basis. During the FY16-17 academic year the TLC provided nearly [6800 tutoring sessions](#).

[Career Services](#)—advises students seeking Associate of Applied Science degrees and works with students who are [seeking alternative credit](#) ([IP 6111](#), [IR 6111](#)). Services provided also include resume building, making application for jobs through College Central Network software system, and career exploration.

Counseling Services—are subcontracted with a local counseling service. Students are offered 3 free counseling sessions upon [referral](#).

[Campus Life](#) – while predominately a commuter campus, housing is provided for 184 students, the majority of which are student athletes. Campus food services are available to faculty, staff, and all students. A wide range of [student organizations](#) and a significant number of activities designed to assist students in developing culturally, socially and educationally are available including concerts, art exhibits, intramural sports, special events, and intercollegiate athletics.

[The College Store](#)– provides course materials, [collaborates with faculty](#), and manages the rental book program. The Meal Plan Card, using a network of local businesses, helps students succeed and encourages retention.

[Fitness Center](#)— available to students, faculty, and staff, the Ben and Martha Bidewell Fitness Center is located in the Bess Student Activity Center and provides up-to-date equipment and instruction in fitness and health.

[The University Center](#)-serves students by making the transition to a four-year degree easier. The Center houses Central Methodist University, Hannibal-LaGrange University, and Southeast Missouri State University. Through this partnership, bachelor's completion programs and master's programs are offered on the Poplar Bluff Campus and locations across Southeast Missouri.

Computer Services - Technology & Computer Services (T&CS) works with the Welcome Center to provide students assistance in accessing their Active Directory account and myTRCC account. [Self-help login assistance](#) is provided on the College website. The Welcome Center works with the student to troubleshoot problems and involves TC&S to perform password resets and solve discovered issues. The Welcome Center also provides a “how to” guide for user logins for Office365 and Blackboard during the new student [orientation presentation](#).

Distance Learning Services- (DLS) provides centralized phone and email support for online students and interactive television (ITV) students. Phone and email support are available to students Monday through Thursday 8:00 AM to 9:30 PM and Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Students can also access web tutorials through our Three Rivers' [Blackboard Support website](#)

(3.D.2) All degree-seeking students are placed in the appropriate programs based on their stated goals and courses appropriate for their level of academic preparation. Student placement is determined primarily through testing using the Accuplacer or other scores such as ACT Exam or transfers, college-credit classes from another institution. Over 70% of students entering TRC are underprepared for college level work in at least one discipline.

To address the academic needs of students enrolled in developmental courses, TRC faculty began redesigning the classes in 2012-13 to better meet the needs of underprepared students and to provide pathways to accelerated completion of developmental coursework. To support the [redesign of developmental education](#), the upper floor of the ARC was [remodeled](#) and classrooms at external locations were enhanced. The faculty renamed “developmental” courses to “transitional” believing the students would prefer the new name to the former. The [Transitional Math Course Syllabi](#) demonstrates the Emporium Model application using a demonstrated mastery approach that begins with determining the students' specific areas of weakness and then creating an individualized learning plan that addresses bringing the identified weaknesses to competency.

[Three Rivers College strengths were identified](#) from the most recent National Community College Benchmark Project. As compared to national data, representing 252 community colleges, TRC showed a Gateway Math Enrollee Success Rate in the 99th Percentile.

Once areas of learning needs are identified, students are allowed to work at an accelerated pace and can complete all transitional math work in one semester. In recent years, a pilot program has been initiated that allows students to enter into college-level math courses with additional instructional support. Great success has been seen in the redesigned course sequence and further evaluation and refining of the courses is constantly underway as the College begins to implement new placement procedures and create new college-level math pathways for student success.

[Transitional Courses in English](#) have also been redesigned. The [ENGL 02](#) course provides preparatory instruction in both writing and grammar and begins with a validation essay to ensure proper course placement. [ENGL 08](#), is a bridge course between ENGL 02 and ENGL 111 and can be taken as a co-requisite course to ENGL 111. ENGL 08 allows students additional support for those who just missed the placement score. This additional course helps students to build skills while they take the college-level writing course.

Preparatory reading skills are developed with [transitional reading courses](#). Students testing into these courses are given additional diagnostic tests on the first day of class to ensure proper placement in an effort to ensure the best support for students in the preparation of the college-level work.

Academic Life Strategies, [ACAD 101](#), was created to provide students the needed academic life skills to be successful in college-level courses. This course is required of any student testing into transitional-level course work. However, it is encouraged for all first-time students. Student data indicates a strong correlation between [ACAD 101 completers and student success](#).

All faculty are encouraged to refer students for assistance who are struggling in a class, missing classes, and academically underperforming through the [Referral Form](#) located on the Employee Gateway website.

In addition to preparatory instruction and referrals, [Student Services](#) provides intrusive advising and proactive efforts to ensure student success and [Disability Services](#) provides needed learning support. TRC has the ACHIEVE (TRiO Student Support Services Program) serving 250 first-generation, low-income students and/or students with disabilities. The Tutoring and Learning Center (TLC) provides academic support for classwork. Tutoring services are provided, primarily in mathematics and English, and can be accessed in person. In addition, distance tutoring is available to serve students either taking online classes or who cannot come to a physical location. Through the [TLC](#), in-person tutoring is available at the Dexter, Malden, Kennett, and Sikeston locations.

(3.D.3) TRC provides academic advising appropriate to our programs and designed to meet the needs of our students. Based on information shown in the Fall 2014 TRC Student Registration Survey, students expressed concern with the availability and knowledge of academic advisors. From this data, an Advising Taskforce of faculty and staff was assembled to create an [Advising Manual](#) and [Checklist](#). The results from the

Fall 2015 Student Registration Survey, again indicated advisor availability as a concern, so the current advising model was evaluated and a change was proposed.

The Fall 2016 TRC Student Registration Survey as well as the [Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory](#) indicated that there was no significant change in the concerns of the students from 2014 to 2016. Specific challenges included, “My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual”, “My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward.”, and “My academic advisor is knowledgeable about the transfer requirements of other schools.” TRC Registration surveys indicated that availability was still a concern. As a result, the Director of Enrollment Services and Student Development attended the regional NACADA Advisors Conference. Through collaboration with Alamo Colleges and using the [Noel-Levitz Retention Best Practices and Student Satisfaction](#), a best practices model of advising was presented and adopted as part of the [TRC 2017-2021 Enrollment Management Plan](#).

The TRC, PSI (Personalized, Seamless, and Intentional) Advising Model began implementation in late Spring 2017. As part of the implementation, [weekly advisor trainings](#) have been conducted in collaboration with the faculty and have included financial aid, student accounts, book store, career services, testing services, disability services, housing, and registrar, to ensure a uniform, high-quality implementation to best benefit our students.

(3.D.4) The TRC infrastructure is designed to meet the needs of students and is guided by the [College Master Plan \(2013\)](#) and the [College Master Plan Update \(2018\)](#). With the completion of the Libla Family Sports Complex, the total square footage is 318,713 sq. ft., not counting the 59,000 sq. ft. of student housing space. With 71 classrooms, laboratories, and computer labs, the instructional space of the College serves the needs of our students. Of the 8 peer institutions in MO, TRC will rank first in feet per FTE once the current project is complete. Square feet per FTE at external locations is higher than on the Poplar Bluff Campus.

Much of the space is either newly renovated or currently under renovation. Since 2009, over 20 million dollars in capital improvements have been made, including the construction of a new classroom building on the main campus, purchase and renovation of facilities in Kennett, the construction of a new building in Sikeston, the expansion of the facilities in Dexter, renovation of the Westover building to locate all student services and financial services in one location, a renovation of the Rutland Library, Tutoring and Learning Center, and classrooms in the Academic Resource Commons, new curtains and sound in the 500-seat theater, the renovation of the student activity center and bookstore, and the purchase of a 108-acre farm to support the Agriculture and Forestry Programs. Additionally, the parking lots, outdoor lighting and sidewalk system on the Poplar Bluff campus have all been renovated.

Instruction is also supported by the Rutland Library. Located in the center of the main campus, the 14,000 square ft. library houses a [collection](#) of nearly 15,000 books, 1500 videos, and over 200,000 electronic books and journals carefully reviewed and selected

to support the instructional offerings of the College. Over the last five years, \$274,000.00 has been strategically invested to improve the physical holdings of the library in support of instruction.

The technology infrastructure is robust and designed to support learning and learning support functions as guided by the [College Technology Plan](#). TRC strategically invests in [technology resources](#) with almost all classrooms containing SMART equipment as well as numerous specialty labs to support instruction ([2020 VISION](#)) and [FY18 Annual Planning Priorities](#). Technology & Computer Services supports a learning and instructional environment consisting of 178 computers for faculty and staff, 812 lab computers in 20 computer labs on the main campus and 16 computer labs across our external locations. With 17 Interactive Television (ITV) rooms, 415 laptops, and 93 master classrooms across all locations. A more comprehensive listing of our current technology environment can be found in the College technology plan. TRC has an enterprise grade campus wireless system to better support a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) environment. The [wireless system](#) consists of 122 wireless access points providing coverage throughout the entire College campus. This is supported by a 10Gb and 1Gb network backbone, with a 500 Mb Internet connection. The College uses Office365 for its student mail service, which allows the installation of Microsoft Office on up to five computers, while providing them 1TB of online OneCloud storage. The IT Support Ticket System is available 24/7 for all faculty and staff to request support for problems related to computers, printers, classroom technology, accounts, phones, and internet connectivity. Technicians are [on campus](#) from Monday through Thursday – 8AM-9:30PM & Friday – 8AM - 5:00PM.

(3.D.5) As previously discussed in 2.E.2, the institution takes seriously the ethical use of research and information resources. The Master Syllabus template found in [Addendum C of IR 6211 Curriculum Development](#) includes information on the subject and is included in all course syllabi. Classes such as [ENGL 111 College Writing](#), [GOVT 121 National and State Government](#) address the ethical use of information. [ENGL 112 Advanced College Writing](#) also addresses plagiarism, academic integrity, as well as writing exercises to develop student understanding on evaluating and using sources and how to cite them appropriately. Students use tools such as [SafeAssign](#) in ENGL 111 to ensure they cited materials correctly. As part of TRC's commitment to guiding students in the ethical and effective use of research and information resources the [Student Code of Conduct SR2610](#) strictly prohibits plagiarism, the New Student Orientation addresses plagiarism (see [quiz](#) and [student work](#).)

Rutland Library staff interact with students frequently to guide them in the ethical use of information resources and offer an online tutorial located on the TRC website. The library staff's best opportunity to impact students' behavior regarding ethical use of information occurs when instructors request, and staff provide, Information Literacy Workshops to students enrolled in their classes. Over sixty workshop sessions were provided to classes during the fall 2017 semester at the main campus as well as external locations. [Information Literacy Workshops](#) occur in but are not limited to: ACAD101, remedial and lower-level English classes, speech classes, and any other classes deemed

by the instructor as necessary for fundamental use of the library learning resources. ([Literacy Session Outline](#)). The [assessment results](#) from the Information Literacy Workshops indicate TRC students understand the concept of plagiarism and the ethical use of information.

TRC's [GAP 1160](#) and [GAR 1160 Institutional Review Board](#) outline the standards for the ethical use of research and information resources by faculty, staff, and external parties.

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## 3.E - Core Component 3.E

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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

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(3.E.1.and3.E.2.) TRC provides a rich variety of co-curricular learning opportunities that are appropriate to our population. Of note are activities embedded in coursework including [class field trips](#), [clinical and laboratory settings](#), and service learning experiences. Faculty, staff, and students decorated and sold [birdhouses](#) to raise funds for the Three Rivers Trail Project. Students are provided the opportunity to express their creativity and explore the arts through the [TRC Tinnin Center](#) events, campus and community [art exhibitions](#), [poetry readings](#), and [musical and theatrical performances](#). Additionally, faculty, staff, and students are all encouraged to participate in the award-winning publication, [Confluence](#). Other events and activities, such as the Christmas Tree program with the Boys and Girls Club where student, faculty and staff decorate trees to be donated to needy families, provide opportunities for community involvement and volunteerism.

[Student Organizations](#) such as the [Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society](#), Alpha Delta Nu Honor Society, Art Club, Baptist Student Union, [Collegiate DECA](#), Gay-Straight Alliance, GO-FAR, and NaFME provide [co-curricular engagement](#) among [students and with faculty](#). Students from the organizations take part in [showcases](#), and [compete](#) in events demonstrating their talents. In 2017, a group of organization sponsors began a leadership development program that included the SGA, PTK officers, the Resident Assistants, and the TRC Ambassadors in a structured program designed to improve student leadership skills. The initial results of the program are covered as part of the Co-Curricular Assessment Report.

TRC athletic opportunities include NJCAA basketball (M&W), baseball, softball, and cheer squad and NIRA Collegiate Rodeo. Often they walk parade routes with Rocky Raider, the College's mascot. The [student athletes](#) are active in the communities as they participate in many local events in the College's service areas. In the Spring of 2017, many of the athletes assisted in local efforts during serious flooding conditions. The Athletic Department began designing a character development program in the Spring of 2016 with initial implementation in Fall 2017. The program is designed to improve behaviors and attitudes in the areas of Citizenship; Uprightness; Trust and Teamwork; Leadership;

Attitude; Service; and Self-Discipline. The initial results of the program are covered in the [Co-Curricular Assessment Report](#). Also reference [Institutional Effectiveness Manual, pg. 57](#).

(3.E.2.) This section was answered as part of (3.E.1.)

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## **3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

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Three Rivers College possesses the resources to support the high quality educational offerings it provides across all modalities of instruction. The College employs credentialed faculty and staff who continue their education and development through a variety of methods.

TRC's General Education Program is comprehensive and creates a curricular environment that supports the acquisition, application and integration of a broad set of learning domains and the exercising of intellectual curiosity and inquiry.

A wide range of support services is in place to aid students in achieving their stated goals and to ensure the highest possibility of success, including co-curricular activities that are appropriate for our population.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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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

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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

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(4.A.1.) Three Rivers College has an improved systematic cyclical program review process that resulted from participation in the HLC Assessment Academy, and also serves as the College's Quality Initiative for this decennial review. The HLC Project and Quality Initiative is titled Assessment and Program Review for Improved Learning ([APRIL](#)). [Since 2015](#), the TRC APRIL Team has focused on implementing the revised program review process as a part of the culture of the College as evidenced by the [APRIL handout](#) used for the presentation during the HLC Assessment Academy Results Forum in [October 2017](#). The team researched comprehensive, best-practices in the development of the [Program Review Template](#).

The primary purpose of Program Review is to enhance the quality of our academic programs through faculty identification of strengths and potential improvement areas. These areas include student learning, curriculum, courses, enrollments, supporting resources, and facilities. Program Managers and the College utilize the results of the program review for long-term planning.

Program Managers engage in a comprehensive program review process in accordance with a three-year cycle where data collection and analysis occurs in years 1 and 2, with the actual Program Review occurring during the fall semester of the third year as shown on pages [52-54 of the Institutional Effectiveness Manual](#). This three-year cycle includes an ongoing discussion between the Program Managers, Program Faculty, Program Advisory Committees, Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Department Chairs about program assessment data and any specific improvement initiatives in progress.

As evidenced by the [Program Review Summary Reports 2016-2017](#), all program reviews must articulate the student learning outcomes for the program and include an [Assessment Plan](#) to determine the degree to which student learning outcomes have been mastered. The assessment plan provides a structure for reporting ongoing SLO assessment data and allows for data to be collected and analyzed, including a schedule for re-evaluation of progress once changes from assessment findings are implemented. The Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Reports [2015-2016](#) and [2016-2017](#) provide examples of the reporting structure, types of assessment, modalities utilized, and supporting data used as part of the program review process.

The [Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#) facilitates the program review process and provides support and assistance to departments and program faculty in conducting their program reviews and developing and implementing the Assessment Plan.

The continuous program improvement assessment cycle comprises five major steps:

- Define program and student learning outcomes;
- Align and assess these outcomes;
- Review and discuss the results of the assessment among program faculty;
- Implement changes indicated by the results of the discussion;
- Re-assess outcomes following a period of implementation of the improvements.

In addition to the internal program review process, the Missouri Department of Higher Education recently conducted statewide academic program review. Each institution was provided an [Institutional Summary Report](#) draft for review by the Chief Academic Officer. The results of the review will be presented to the Coordinating Board of Higher Education March 2018

(4.A.2.) All credit awarded for advanced placement is evaluated by TRC. Advanced placement may be awarded to a student, after evaluation, for the completion of a College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Advanced College Testing Proficiency Program (AP) credit, Credit for Prior Learning, Military Experience and Training, and Credit

Transferred from other colleges as outlined on [pages 21-22 of the College Catalog](#) and in [IP6102 Transfer Credit](#) and [IP](#) and [IR 6111 Alternative College Credit](#).

Transfer credit from other colleges that are regionally and/or nationally accredited is evaluated by the Office of the Registrar per [IP6102 Transfer Credit](#). Courses matching those in the TRC course inventory are transcribed as transfer credit. Those courses requiring further evaluation are submitted to the academic unit for evaluation and transcribed when deemed equivalent. Transfer credit is only awarded from an official transcript, and any coursework completed at a college or university outside the US must be evaluated by a recognized third party evaluator.

CLEP credit is transcribed according to the chart in the [College Catalog page 21](#). AP is transferred in from the [AP Exam Table](#) that faculty have evaluated and determined to be appropriate, which is currently under review by the faculty.

Alternative College Credit (ACC) is evaluated as outlined in the Policy [IP 6111](#) and uses the process found in the [Guide to Alternative Credit](#) at the back of [IR 6111 Alternative College Credit](#). TRC does not award credit based on portfolio evaluation of life experience.

[Transcript examples](#) show the various recording methods used by TRC.

(4.A.3.) Policies and regulations that govern acceptance of transfer credit have been established ([IP 6102 Transfer Credit](#); [IP 6111 Alternative College Credit](#); and [IR 6111 Alternative College Credit](#)). These policies and procedures are located on the [College website](#) and outlined on pages [21-22](#) of the College Catalog. Missouri has established a 42-hour General Education block that transfers to all public institutions of higher education in the state as outlined on [page 44](#) of the College Catalog.

(4.A.4.) Three Rivers College has clearly defined prerequisites for courses. The prerequisites can be found on the [Section Information](#) page of a course in myTRCC, on Course Syllabi (as demonstrated with [GOVT 121 Master Syllabus](#)), as part of the course description on [pages 163-192 of the College Catalog](#), and in [Academic Planning](#). The [Placement chart in the College Catalog pg. 16](#) outlines placement score requirements for courses. Prerequisite course requirements are monitored in several ways to ensure proper placement of students. The TRC Academic Planning Module is programmed to prevent students from registering for a class if they have not met the appropriate prerequisite. College advisors also counsel students regarding prerequisite course requirements, including any developmental coursework. A [Prerequisite Mismatch Report](#) (RQMM) is generated prior to the beginning of each semester and students are removed from a course they registered for in an upcoming semester if they were not successful in a prerequisite course. For example, if a student did not successfully complete MATH 103 but has enrolled for MATH 163 during the semester they were enrolled in MATH 103, the student would show up on the mismatch report and would be removed from MATH 163.

College curricular changes are made through the established procedures in [IR 6211 – Curriculum Development](#). The purpose of this Curriculum Development process is to provide consistent information related to the development, revision, and discontinuation of TRC curricula. All curricula changes are vetted and approved by the College Curriculum Committee, [a standing committee of the Faculty](#), comprised of eight faculty members representing each of the Departments of the College. The Curriculum Committee meets monthly during the academic year. Examples required to be approved by the Curriculum Committee are the addition of new programs, development of new courses, and changes to course descriptions, course names, course requisites, course outcomes, and/or course fees. Upon approval by the College Curriculum Committee, the curriculum is moved forward for faculty review and placed on the next [Faculty Meeting Agenda](#) for discussion and approval by the faculty-at-large. The CAO notifies the College President of the changes for the [President's Approval](#). In addition to this process, all Career and Technical Education Programs have Advisory Committees and meetings to seek advisement and information regarding program curricular changes. Recommendations from Programmatic Advisory Committees ensures Career and Technical Education programs and course offerings are relevant and current.

To ensure and maintain the rigor of online and hybrid courses, all courses taught in this modality must go through the same curriculum approval process with the additional documentation of [Time on Task](#) and [Course Framework](#) for Online Courses. This documentation is to show evidence of the expectation that students in the online or hybrid environment meet student learning outcomes equivalent to that of a traditionally delivered course with the same time on task requirements.

As indicated in 3.C.2, TRC employs faculty qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the College with appropriate credentials from a regionally accredited institution. All general education faculty must have a minimum of a master's degree with eighteen graduate hours in the content area or a master's degree with an additional eighteen hours of discipline specific graduate work. This includes dual credit instructors as well. Career and Technical Education faculty are generally expected to have at least a bachelor's degree but may have a combination of academic credentials, appropriate certification in their field, verification of related occupational experience obtained within the most recent ten years and/or a state teaching certification in the area to be taught. All faculty teaching dual credit courses must have credentials equivalent to faculty teaching at TRC. A few TRC dual credit faculty are still working on their [recovery plan](#) as it relates to the [extension granted](#) by the Higher Learning Commission.

A thorough credentialing process has been implemented to ensure all faculty, both full and part time, are credentialed to teach their assigned courses. This process begins with the Department Chair performing a careful screening of application material to include application, vitae, and transcripts. Upon approval by the Department Chair, a [Faculty Qualification Form](#) is completed which requires documentation of an applicant's qualifications including academic credentials, specialized training, and relevant experience, which is then submitted to the Chief Academic Officer along with any supporting documentation for review and approval. The College President grants final

approval of credentials and initials the Faculty Qualification Form for an application to be complete. Updates to a faculty credential must follow the same process with the necessary documentation to support the update placed in both the HR and SPOL Faculty Credentialing File .

Once a faculty member's credentials to teach a specific course or discipline have been approved, the information is uploaded into the Credentialing Module in Strategic Planning Online (SPOL). All electronic faculty credentialing documents are sent to the Office of Human Resources to be included in the official faculty file. Electronic copies of faculty curriculum vitae, licenses, certificates, as well as related experiential documentation, the faculty [credentialing certification](#), and semester teaching roster are all contained and maintained in the electronic [SPOL Credentialing Module](#). The SPOL repository of faculty information is a searchable database and allows for a report to be run each semester that will show any inconsistencies between faculty teaching assigned courses and the courses for which they are credentialed to ensure that all courses are being taught by fully credentialed faculty. To teach an online course, TRC requires additional Quality Matters (QM) training which is also documented in their online credentialing file.

TRC provides a variety of student learning services and support. The Academic Resource Commons (ARC) houses the Rutland Library, with a staff led by a professional library services director, which provides support for the numerous database references the College has, answering individual questions at the reference desk, and provides [Literacy Sessions](#).

The Academic Resource Commons (ARC) also houses the Tutoring and Learning Center (TLC) with online tutoring available, the ACHIEVE Program (TRiO), and a developmental reading/writing lab and a math lab that utilizes the Emporium Model. With the exception of the ACHIEVE Program, all of these services are also available at our external locations with oversight and support from the Poplar Bluff Campus.

The College maintains Blackboard the Learning Management System utilized for all courses. The College is responsible for the services it provides through that medium and is responsible for its maintenance. Additionally, the College maintains a student management system (Colleague) used by students and faculty for academic planning and as an enterprise level system for Academic Records, Human resources, Financial Services, and other College areas.

(4.A.5.) Three Rivers College has several specialized accreditations for programs including the Medical Laboratory Technology, Paramedic, Nursing, Occupational Therapy Assistant, and Business and Information Services Technology (IST), as shown on the [College Website](#). The following organizations accredit these programs:

- [Medical Laboratory Technology Program](#) is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS). Last visit in October 2017 (pending results). Current accreditation: Full-accreditation

- [Paramedic Program](#) (AAS, One-year certificate) is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education upon the recommendation of Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professional. Last accreditation visit spring 2015. Current accreditation: Full-accreditation
- [AAS-Nursing Program](#) is accredited by the Accreditation Commission on Education in Nursing (ACEN). Last visit in September 2017 (pending results). Current accreditation: Accredited with warning status.
- [Occupational Therapy Assistant Program](#) has been granted accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE), the accrediting body of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). Next visit: July 2018. Current accreditation: Accredited
- [Business and IST Programs](#) are accredited by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). Last visit: 2010. Current accreditation: Accredited

(4.A.6.) Three Rivers College evaluates the success of its graduates. The TRC curriculum consists of programs designed to prepare students for transfer to a baccalaureate granting institution or to prepare students to enter the workforce. The tracking of students after graduation poses many challenges, especially with those that enter the workforce. TRC monitors the success of our graduates through the student clearinghouse, surveys sent to students, employers, and through state wage record reports.

Two of the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) used by TRC address the success of the graduates. The first KPI that addresses graduate success is concerned with the licensure pass rates of those students graduating from a program where a license is required to be employed. Over the last two years, 87.2% and 87.9% of our graduates have passed their licensure exams, resulting in the College meeting this KPI both times as shown on [page 44 of the 2017 College Factbook](#).

Traditionally, the employment status of TRC's career graduates has been tracked using a post graduation employment survey. This methodology consistently has had a low return rate and resulted in little being known about the employment status of TRC graduates. Two years ago, discussions of adding a 6<sup>th</sup> KPI resulted in the state agreeing to compare the students who were not known to Missouri wage data to strengthen these results. From this effort, the information about College graduates has greatly improved. This data is presented as the [Graduate Outcomes Report](#), and exists for the 2014-2015 and the 2016-2017 graduates. For the 2014-2015 TRC Cohort, 327 students graduated with a career degree or certificate. Based on the survey, 121 students (37%) responded and were identified as either pursuing further education, serving in the military or employed in their field of study. One key finding was that 86.8% of those responding were employed in their field of study and no one responded as unemployed or employed in an unrelated field. Using wage records, TRC was able to determine that of all student graduates, transfer degrees, career degrees and certificates, 87.7% were either seeking further education or employed. For the 2016-2017 TRC Cohort, through the traditional

survey methods resulted in responses from 201 of the 285 career graduates. Of those students responding, 77% were employed in the field of their educational program, 10% were attending a four-year institution, 4% were attending a two-year institution, and only 8% indicated some other status. When the most [current information](#) from wage records was included for all TRC graduates, the College was able to account for 96.1% of its graduates and found that 90.7% were either pursuing further education or were employed.

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## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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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

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(4.B.1.,2.,3.,4.) Three Rivers College demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning. The impetus of TRC's commitment to students' educational success and the improvement of student learning is the product of the clearly stated Mission Statement and Vision Statement that are posted on TRC's website.

#### Mission Statement

Three Rivers College inspires, prepares, and empowers students to succeed through open-access to high-quality learning opportunities that meet the needs of the communities we serve.

#### Vision Statement

Three Rivers College will be the preeminent, cutting-edge community of learners with a student-first focus, and will operate as a vibrant, dynamic catalyst for the creation of opportunities that foster learning and student success.

The College's Strategic Plan, [2020 Vision](#), developed by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees is fully aligned with the College mission and vision. In [2020 Vision](#) a number of themes that impact student learning exist: Excellent Student Service, High Quality Instruction, Learning Environment, Resource Development, and Student Enrollment, Retention, and Transfer.

For each theme, strategies were identified to improve student learning. The strategies focus on important tasks such as growing advisor capacity, assessing and improving advising and registration processes, assessing and improving financial aid processes,

improving communication to students, refining policies and procedures for student services, clarifying curricular requirements, and utilizing student feedback for informed decisions, as examples.

The institution states its commitment to Outcomes Assessment in [GAP 1140](#) and [GAR 1140 Institutional Effectiveness](#). Planning and assessment processes are closely tied and faculty use outputs, outcomes, benchmarks, institutional targets, and results for planning as appropriate to their program needs. This process is fully discussed in the [Institutional Effectiveness Manual, pp. 42-51](#).

Since the 2008 HLC Decennial visit, the College has worked diligently to create an effective student learning assessment and improvement system. As a result of our first participation in the [HLC's Assessment Academy \(2008-2013\)](#), the institution created a system based on seven College outcomes with numerous faculty committees. All faculty members participated in this process. This process was reported in the 2013 Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy Results Forum and is described in [HLC Focused Visit](#). As the seven outcome system was implemented and the College attempted to find meaningful data to make substantive improvements in student learning it was discovered that the process was very cumbersome and resulted in the faculty focusing on the process and specific courses instead of learning as a whole and student learning improvement. From this discovery, it was decided that the process had to be improved. To seek a solution and to maintain focus on creating a meaningful learning improvement system, the College joined the three-year, HLC Assessment Academy as its Quality Initiative in 2014, which is the TRC, "Assessment and Program Review for Improved Learning (APRIL)". The APRIL team was comprised of the Department Chairs, the Assessment Coordinator, the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, and the Dean of Instruction. APRIL included redefining the College-wide Outcomes, the processes and methodologies used for data collection, analysis and reporting, as well as, the Program Review process, with assessment cycles. The APRIL Team researched and created rubrics and program review templates to build a consistent process.

In an effort to understand assessment more holistically, the Dean of Instruction, the Assessment Coordinator, one of the Department Chairs, and other faculty members attended the 2014 [Assessment Institute](#) where Barbara E. Walvoord presented. As a result of attending the conference, the APRIL Project was informed by Linda Suskie's *Five Dimensions of Quality: A Common Sense Guide to Accreditation and Accountability* as indicated in the [APRIL Handout](#). The five dimensions created a framework to demonstrate how a better-defined process could impact the College's culture and how many elements could be tied together. Additionally, during 2015, the Assessment Coordinator completed the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) Courses: Introduction to Learning Outcomes, Overview of Survey Design, Foundations of Data Management, and Foundational Statistics for Decision Support, and Designing IR Research. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness also purchased numerous learning resources for the faculty such as *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education*.

As a result of the HLC, APRIL Project, the College redesigned SLO processes to focus on four institutional outcomes and streamlined a more workable program review design. The new data collection and analysis process has successfully focused the College on improvement of learning instead of simply focusing on the process. Under the revised assessment process, [College-wide Outcomes](#) are assessed to provide an overall portrait of learning determined by the faculty for all students who attend Three Rivers College. The collection and assessment of outcomes is completed for general education course offerings and the outcomes data informs quality initiatives to improve student learning at the institution. [See Report.](#)

Program and course-level student learning outcomes are developed by faculty and are the same for each course across all modalities of instruction. Program Learning Outcomes are established within a given program to identify the learning goals intended to be mastered upon completion of a specific degree or certificate. Programmatic outcomes are more broadly stated than Course Learning Outcomes. Course Learning Outcomes are statements of learning taught within a specific course. These Objectives are usually more specific in nature as compared to programmatic or College-wide outcomes. Learning Activities are tasks directed to students that are likely to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Student learning is the intended outcome of a learning task.

Assessment tools are the evaluative instruments used to assess the effectiveness of the learning activities and the level of student learning that occurred in relation to the intended outcomes. Rubrics are used to assess learning outcomes. Course learning outcomes align with program outcomes to ensure students are receiving the same program content. Faculty work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to ensure the outcomes are measurable, are mapped to the program outcomes and align with the course and program curricula. The outcomes are reviewed and approved through the Curriculum Development process in [IR 6211 Curriculum Development](#). The process involves individual faculty, the Dean of Instruction, the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, department level faculty, Department Chairs, and a Faculty Curriculum Committee. The proposed [curriculum improvements](#) are then presented to the faculty-at-large for approval to ensure changes are heard and discussed in the event a change has ramifications for other College courses or programs. The [Master Syllabus Template](#) and resultant Master Course Syllabus are used by faculty to document course Student Learning Outcomes, which are stated in the [Course Syllabi](#).

Assessment of program and course student learning outcomes are documented by the members of the faculty. The Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes Reports ([2016 2017 Program Level SLO Report Business Management AAS](#)) are reviewed by the [Student Learning Improvement Committee \(SLIC\)](#), as charged by the [Faculty Bylaws](#), who review and make suggestions to strengthen the assessment as well the improvement of student learning. Additionally, the Student Learning Improvement Committee reviews college-wide outcomes data and proposes suggestions, which are presented as a [SLIC Executive Summary Report](#). The data is presented and reviewed with the faculty-at-large, and given to the Faculty Executive Committee. The Executive Committee charges the

Department Chairs with improving student learning in the areas identified by SLIC feedback and the results of using the outcomes data (see [Executive Committee Minutes](#)).

Program assessment is also part of the Program Review Process cooperatively developed by the Department Chairs and program faculty. As indicated on [page 52](#) of the Institutional Effectiveness Manual, the Program Review is performed on a timeline cycle to provide the program manager, the respective advisory board, and the institution findings from student outcomes as well as a review of current industry standards. This process includes systematic data collection on an institutional and program level as evidenced by the [Student Learning Outcomes \(SLO\) 2015-2016](#), [Student Learning Outcomes \(SLO\) 2016-2017](#), and [College-Wide Outcomes Assessment Summary Report 2016-2017](#).

Once curriculum improvements are proposed, they are [entered into Strategic Planning Online \(SPOL\)](#) as an objective to track assessment processes, outcomes data collection, and to provide an action plan for faculty to note progress as well as their actual results and use of results from the implementation of the improved curriculum.

In addition to reviewing Program Student Learning Outcomes Reports, the Student Learning Improvement Committee (SLIC) also reviews data from the assessed courses through embedded assessments that utilize the faculty approved College-wide Outcomes Rubrics for [Communication Fluency](#), [Critical Thinking](#), [Cultural Awareness](#), and [Information Literacy](#). It was determined from the collection of SLO College-wide Outcomes Data that critical thinking was a challenge for our students. [AAS Program Courses](#) were also assessed using the Critical Thinking Rubric.

One example of utilizing student outcomes data was the creation of an ITV Taskforce to develop an ITV Manual (In Progress). The data provided in the [Feedback Report](#) by the Student Learning Improvement Committee in March 2017 indicated that student learning in the modality of Interactive Television appeared to be considerably weaker than in the traditional or online modality. The recommendation for a taskforce specific to ITV was presented by SLIC and was voted on by the faculty at large in the fall of 2017. From the faculty at large, six faculty members who actively teach in the ITV modality formed and are in the process of creating a handbook with best practices for ITV instructors at Three Rivers. This data is also reflected in the [Distance Learning Assessment Report 2016-2017](#).

The [Spring 2016 Math Summary](#) provides another example of the use of data to improve student learning and has been a continuous improvement effort by the math faculty to increase the number of students who successfully transition through developmental algebra to college algebra. This project began several years ago as one of the College's initiatives in a Strengthening Institutions, Title III Grant. The math faculty adopted the [Math Emporium Model](#) and each semester, data is collected concerning the percent of students completing a post-test on the first attempt. Over the course of several years, numerous changes have been made to the math curriculum and course procedures based on the analysis of this data to include requiring the use of guided video notebooks,

restructuring course content into more manageable pieces and instituting a more stringent attendance requirement. TRC's math emporium model [was named as a best practice](#) by the Missouri Community College Association.

The use of Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) provides yet another example of best practices in the methodologies of the College. The SPOL system provides a framework for collaboration and shared data through several [shared data Libraries](#). This electronic software allows Planning Managers to engage in the development of annual strategic planning, assesses programs, assemble and align planning with budget needs, write budget justifications and demonstrate the actual results and use of results for future planning and assessment.

The College is also improving its assessment of co-curricular programs, using the experience from the HLC APRIL Project and through the development, implementation and evaluation of the college assessment program. In 2017, a group of organization sponsors began a leadership development program. This group included the sponsors for SGA, PTK, GO-FAR Club, Student Resident Assistants, and the TRC Student Ambassadors in a structured co-curricular program designed to improve student leadership skills.

The athletic department began designing a character development program in the Spring of 2016 with initial implementation in Fall 2017. The program is designed to develop behaviors and attitudes in the areas of Citizenship; Uprightness; Trust and Teamwork; Leadership; Attitude; Service; and Self-Discipline. The initial results of the program are covered in the [Co-Curricular Assessment Report](#).

(4.B.2.) Answered in (4.B.1)

(4.B.3.) Answered in (4.B.1)

(4.B.4.) Answered in (4.B.1)

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## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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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

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(4.C.1.) The Three Rivers College Strategic Plan, [2020 Vision](#), was developed by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee to guide planning processes and direct resources in an effort to fulfill the Mission. 2020 Vision contains six strategic themes, one of which gives specific attention to [Student Enrollment, Retention, and Transfer](#).

Specific goals for retention, persistence, and completion and student success are set at ambitious levels that are attainable. The goals are in line with the strategic plan of the College, communicated broadly, tracked and acted upon as part of the continuous improvement planning process. The goals are set forth in the College Benchmarks as reported in the [Institutional Benchmarking Data Executive Summary Report 2016-2017](#) and in the [College Factbook](#). The data on the College performance against the benchmarks and KPIs are used in establishing the annual planning priorities to ensure that the most current action is taken annually to continuously work to improve performance.

TRC Benchmarks are gathered from the previous year's data:

I. Enrollment: Maintain enrollment at or above "similar institutions" in the state as measured by Fall Census Headcount.

II. Retention: First Time Student Fall to Spring 75% and First Time Student Fall to Fall 52.5%

III. Student Satisfaction: (90% or Better) as measured by the Graduation Survey.

IV. Remedial/Developmental Success: Key Performance Indicator (KPI) (Meet the KPI) through the National Benchmarking Project 66 percentile rank, or improve from prior year or improve by using data from the 3-year rolling average.

V. Completion/Transfer Rates: Key Performance Indicator (KPI) (Meet the KPI) through the National Benchmarking Project 66 percentile rank, or improve from prior year or improve by using data from the 3-year rolling average.

VI. College Financial Ratio: This should indicate the College is operating with adequate funds. This data is kept by the Chief Financial Officer of the College. This rate fluctuates based on the College debt ratio and the major building projects.

The [Annual Strategic Planning Retreat](#) occurs in the spring semester every year. All of the planning and program managers participate in the review of the [annual planning priorities](#) as [presented](#) by the College President and the [accomplishments](#) that have occurred during the past year towards the strategic plan. The priorities are broad in scope as they encapsulate the many needs of the institution. Planning managers include objectives aimed at improving the KPIs and Benchmarks in their annual continuous improvement plans as is appropriate for their functional area. To ensure that all planning managers have needed data, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness prepares compiled reports and creates meaningful datasets for each of the planning managers based on their area of supervision. In addition to the datasets distributed at the annual planning retreat the Office of Institutional Effectiveness publishes reports on its webpage including: [Student Learning Outcomes \(SLO\) Reports](#), [Program Review Summary Reports 2016-2017](#), [College-Wide Assessment Summary Report 2016-2017](#), [Distance Learning Assessment Report](#), [Co-curricular Assessment Report 2017](#), [Retention Report](#), [External Location Retention Report](#), [AAS Program Report](#), [Two-Year Graduate Outcomes Report](#), College Scorecard, Fast Facts, [IPEDS Feedback Report](#), and the [College Factbook](#).

The College engages in systematic, integrated continuous improvement planning through a strategic planning process that considers [institutional outputs and outcomes assessment data](#) and benchmarking data when evaluating the need for improvements to educational programs, services, and operations in an ongoing continuous improvement cycle. This comprehensive approach ensures the institution engages in planning that is data informed and designed to improve results.

The Institutional Benchmarking measures have been created to provide stakeholders of Three Rivers College an analysis of key findings as part of an ongoing dialogue across the institution. The College is dedicated to continuous improvement that ultimately improves the college experience and quality of learning for our students.

The goals set forth by TRC are not only realistic and obtainable, positive results are being seen as discussed in the [Institutional Benchmarking Data Executive Summary Report 2016-2018](#).

(4.C.2.) In addition to what has been stated in 4.C.1, the data and information collected that address retention, persistence, and completion are reported in the [Institutional Benchmarking Data Executive Summary Report 2016-2018](#). On page three, goals are established in this report regarding:

Retention: First Time Student Fall to Spring 75% and First Time Student Fall to Fall 52.5%. Page 5 of the report indicates the institution has not met its goal; however, it is currently trending upwards at 71.5% in the spring of 2017.

Remedial/Developmental Success: Key Performance Indicator (KPI) (Meet the KPI) through the National Benchmarking Project 66 percentile rank, or improve from prior year or improve by using data from the 3-year rolling average. Math Developmental Success did not meet the goal in 2015, but has been successful in subsequent years. English Developmental Success met the goal in 2016 and 2017, but did not obtain the goal in the 2018.

Completion/Transfer Rates: Key Performance Indicator (KPI) (Meet the KPI) through the National Benchmarking Project 66 rank, or improve rank, or improve from prior year or improve by using data from the 3 year rolling average. Data indicates three successful years for completion and transfer rates.

One significant challenge to success for TRC students is that many are placed into a transitional course as indicated in the [Factbook 2017](#). Students place into a transitional course as follows:

2017 - 63% of first-time students required at least one transition course;

2016 – 73% of first-time students required at least one transition course;

2015 – 70% of first-time students required at least one transition course;

2014 – 73.5% of first-time students required at least one transition course.

Factors such as these led the institution to adapt new practices in an effort to meet the needs of the students and help more of them succeed. This level of reporting demonstrates the commitment of the institution to collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.

(4.C.3.) TRC uses the data to make improvements to its operations and curriculum to improve retention, persistence and completion. The following examples demonstrate significant efforts [across the institution](#) and its commitment to continuous improvement.

One effort to improve retention and persistence focused on attendance. In 2016, the College created and approved [IP 6310](#) and [IR 6310 Classroom Attendance](#) after a pilot project in the English department showed promising results in improving student success through stressing the importance of attendance.

Another example of using data to improve retention, persistence and student success was the complete redesign of developmental education now known as transitional education. The College received a Title III, Strengthening Institutions Grant and as one major part of the grant, the transitional courses taught in reading, English, and math were all redesigned. Data gathered during the development of the grant application indicated low levels of retention, persistence and student success in transitional and gateway courses. A significant amount of work went into researching and redesigning these courses. Several faculty and staff went to [various colleges and trainings](#) to discover how best to solve the problem, leading to the current practices and course design.

As part of the redesign of the transitional program, a new course, ACAD101, Academic Life Strategies was created. Any student placed into a transitional course must take ACAD101 and the course may be taken by any student. This course is designed to assist students in developing life-management skills to help them navigate many of life's challenges and academic skills that will assist them in being a successful college student.

Another element of particular concern was students who entered the College with extremely low reading levels. As part of the redesign and to specifically address the students entering with low reading levels, a faculty member specializing in reading was added and an additional level of reading instruction was added.

Retention and persistence in distance learning courses is also considered and acted upon. Based on data indicating rates of persistence and success were lower in online courses than in face to face courses, the College implemented an improvement plan using Quality Matters (see 5.C.5) to improve online instruction. As a result of this initiative, all instructors teaching online classes are [QM Trained](#) and all courses must go through a [review process](#).

The creation of an ITV Taskforce to create an ITV Manual was the direct result of student learning outcomes data. The data provided in the Feedback Report by the Student Learning Improvement Committee (SLIC) in March 2017 indicated that student learning in the modality of Interactive Television appeared to be considerably weaker than in the traditional or online modality. The recommendation for a taskforce specific to ITV was recommended by SLIC and presented to the faculty at large in the fall of 2017. From the faculty at large, six faculty members who actively teach in the ITV setting were selected to serve on an ITV taskforce and, at the time of this writing, are in the process of creating a handbook with best practices for ITV instructors at Three Rivers. This data and information is also reflected in the [Distance Learning Assessment Report 2016-2017](#).

The [Spring 2016 Math Summary](#) provides another example of the use of data to improve student learning and has been a continuous improvement effort by the math faculty to increase the number of students who successfully transition and persist through developmental math to college algebra. This project began several years ago as one of the College's initiatives in a Title III grant. The math faculty adopted the Math Emporium Model and each semester, data is collected concerning the percent of students completing a post-test on the first attempt. Over the course of several years, changes to

the curriculum and course procedures based on the analysis of this data include requiring the use of guided video notebooks, restructuring course content into more manageable “chunks,” and instituting a more stringent attendance requirement.

To improve retention, persistence, and completion TRC has developed and is implementing a College wide [Enrollment Management Plan 2016-2020](#) and a new advising model. The plan focuses on two facets of enrollment: Recruitment and Retention. Many offices across campus will be involved in the plan—Advising center ([PSI Advising Model](#)), external location advisors, faculty in the learning environment and as advisors ([Advising Manual](#)— which is shown in draft form as it is currently being revised), faculty appointed Advising and Retention Committee, and all cabinet members.

The PSI (Personal, Seamless, and Intentional) Advising Model has advisors and their students working together with specific expectations from both to have meaningful contact points throughout each semester the student continues with us through graduation. All contact points are tracked with each advisor in the Advising Center at Poplar Bluff and at External Locations.

The [EARP \(Early Alert Retention Program\)](#) is another initiative started to address retention, persistence, and completion data. The program is designed to create early intervention when faculty report students are not attending class, turning in assignments or failing assignments or exams. The form is submitted to Administrative Assistant for Enrollment Services. The advisors are then given the list to make contact with students to advise them of all available resources within the College and externally.

These examples demonstrate the College not only collects and analyzes information but also uses that information in meaningful ways to make improvements.

(4.C.4.) TRC uses sound methodologies, based on best practices, to determine, gather and report data and adheres to the IPEDS methodologies with regard to data collection for student retention, persistence, and completion. This data and information is used to make decisions and improvements as warranted by the data. Colleague, an integrated student information system, is used for data collection of student data including demographics, enrollment information, grades, and course information. The Registrar is responsible for maintaining the integrity of student data.

## Sources

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- 2017 Strategic Planning Accomplishments Executive Summary Report-Final
- 2020 VISION
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- 4.C.3.Distance Learning Assessment Report 2016-2017
- 4.C.3.EARP Form
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- 4.C.3.Spring 2016 Math Summary
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- Program Data Report 2014-2016.TRC.pdf
- Program Review Summary Reports.2016.2017
- TRC Strategic Planning Retreat FY19
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## **4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary**

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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**

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Three Rivers College is committed to providing the highest quality educational offerings possible and has a sustainable and effective learning assessment system actively used to improve student learning. Student learning is measured across the spectrum of offerings and the information is used to develop and institute new initiatives and methods in a continuous attempt to improve student learning. Stated student learning outcomes are present for all courses, programs, and the institution and are purposely mapped to create a strong system of learning aimed at student success.

Programs are evaluated and assessed through a process that allows the program faculty and the College to make meaningful decisions to advance our programs for our students. College-wide outputs such as retention, persistence and completion rates are carefully monitored and used to modify and improve services to increase performance across the institution.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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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

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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

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(5.A.1.) TRC has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

Three Rivers College has fiscal resources and physical infrastructure to support operations. [Revenue](#) mainly comes from tuition and fees (46%), state appropriations (22%), Auxiliary Enterprises (12%), and local property taxes (8%). Revenues, over time, have remained relatively consistent and revenue projections each year vary mostly with enrollment. A budget is presented to and adopted by the Board of Trustees annually and is monitored monthly through the financial report, which includes budget to actual comparisons. Since 2009, the College has been able to maintain a balanced budget and to increase net assets from \$13,026,061 in 2009 to \$22,407,766 in 2017. The College has been able to control expenses through zero-based budgeting. Each budget request [must be justified](#) through the planning cycle and each justification is examined before the budget is allocated to ensure it supports the College plan. Through zero-based budgeting, the College has been able to maintain strong financial ratios. The most recent [Composite Financial Indicator Score](#) is at its highest point since 2013. TRC

undergoes an independent audit each year and has received [unqualified audits](#) for the last several years and been designated a low risk auditee.

TRC has maintained a stable number of faculty and staff over the last five to seven years, as shown on pages [39-40](#) of the [College Fact Book](#). Adjunct faculty and part-time staff numbers have fluctuated, depending on enrollment. Salaries and wages have increased by a range of 1.5% to 3.0% over the last two to three years.

Positions are under continuous review to ensure the human resources of the College are best allocated to fulfill the mission. New positions and/or restructuring are requested on an annual basis as part of the planning and budget request process. Of particular note are staffing adjustments made to serve the needs of external locations and distance learning. As needs were presented in 2015 for the external locations, [additional positions](#) were added, and in 2017 an additional full-time position of Assistant Coordinator for Distance Learning Services was added to extend student services as well as to perform equipment maintenance and upgrades. Since January of 2012, approximately [158 positions](#) have been revised or added. The [Organizational Chart](#) provides the structure of the institution by department and location.

In 2013, the College implemented a [Facilities Master Plan](#) detailing current and future plans. Through the use of Federal Grants, external fundraising, bond issues and a onetime state appropriation, numerous projects from the master plan have been accomplished and a large amount of deferred maintenance has been addressed as shown by the [2018 Facilities Master Plan](#) Update. Additionally, the majority of the ongoing maintenance projects are handled in-house which saves the College a great deal of money each year.

With the completion of the Libla Family Sports Complex, the total square footage of 318,713 square feet, not counting the 59,000 square feet of student housing space, TRC will be first among the 2-year colleges in Missouri in square ft. per FTE.

Three Rivers College (TRC) has [strategically invested](#) in technological infrastructure that has resulted in a robust technology infrastructure, including multiple Storage Array Network devices for data storage, and using Acronis Software for data backups and disaster recovery purposes. TRC supports “bring your own device” (BYOD) with an enterprise grade campus wireless system. Faculty, staff, and students all have access to the wireless network on personal devices such as laptops, tablets, and smart phones. TRC’s infrastructure upgrades and general maintenance are guided by the [Technology Plan](#) and future focused with the anticipation that each person on campus will have multiple wireless devices. With 93 master classrooms, 812 lab computers, in 20 computer labs on the main campus and 16 computer labs across our external locations and approximately 178 faculty and staff workstations supported by 20 physical servers hosting 103 virtual servers, the technological infrastructure meets the needs of our learning environment. Internet access is provided at a bandwidth speed of 500Mb with a 20Mb VoIP connection at the PB Campus and 20Mb to 50Mb internet connections with a 1Gb network backbone for external locations.

[17 ITV classrooms](#) are equipped with modern equipment and were recently upgraded in spring 2017 to High Definition. The College utilizes Blackboard Learn for online courses and in support of face-to-face and inter-active television (ITV) courses.

[Phone and email support](#) for Blackboard is available Monday through Thursday 8:00AM to 9:30PM and Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Students and instructors are also provided 24/7 self-help resources on the [Blackboard support](#) and [general support](#) pages of the College website.

(5.A.2.) Instruction is emphasized in the allocation of resources. In support of TRC's mission, the College's [audited financial statements](#) for the year ended June 30, 2017 show the largest share of expense is allocated to the Instruction and Academic Support functional categories at 43%. Student Services and Institutional Support comprised 31% of expenses. The remaining expenses were attributed to Operation of Plant (7%), Auxiliary (9%), Depreciation (7%), and Financial Aid (3%) refer to [Financial Statements](#).

The College's Operating Budget for the 2017-2018 year reflects 37% of the budget allocated to the Instruction and Academic Support categories. Shared institutional expenses such as Operation of Maintenance and Plant, Marketing and Advertising, and Computer Services are accounted for centrally. Therefore, those significant costs fall outside the Instruction and Academic Support categories but certainly play a supportive role for all functions of the College. Refer to [Budget FY18](#).

In the [2016-2017 College IPEDS data](#), 69.17% (\$18 million) of funds expended were allocated to instruction, academic support, student services and scholarships. Three Rivers College reports several expenses such as technology and institutional effectiveness centrally. As such, they are reported to IPEDS in the institutional support functional category. Of the 16.37% (\$4.3 million) total expenses allocated to institutional support, 7.94% (\$2.1 million) supports instruction and student services activities. Additionally, the College reports several expenses such as the operations of the theatre and student testing to IPEDS in the auxiliary enterprise functional category. Of the 13.76% (\$3.6 million) total expenses allocated to auxiliary enterprises, 1.41% (\$367,000) supports instruction and student services activities.

As outlined in [FP3101 Budget and Financial Processes](#) and [FP3103 Budget Preparation and Adoption](#), the College's annual [planning cycle begins](#) in January during the [TRC Strategic Planning Retreat](#); when planning managers review findings from annual accomplishments and challenges, establish their annual objectives and develop departmental plans. Budget requests are then prepared using the electronic system, Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) by the SPOL planning managers based on their approved plans. The TRC budget development process is a "zero based model" and includes requests for annual operational expenses as well as enhancements. Each budget request must contain a justification in SPOL. Justifications must include documentation relating to cost and need for the request as referenced in [GAP1140](#) and [GAR1140 Institutional Effectiveness](#). In conjunction with their supervisor, planning

managers refine their budget requests in SPOL to ensure alignments with the College's [annual priorities](#) and the [2020 VISION](#) strategic plan.

Representatives to the Budget Allocations Committee are nominated by the members of the College Cabinet from each major area of the College. The committee completes a collaborative review of the combined budget requests to bring the requests into balance with revenue projections. Final review is performed by the President and CFO using SPOL, to develop the proposal to be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval as referenced in the [Institutional Effectiveness Manual](#).

The following documents show an example of documents used to make decisions about budget. SPOL Document [Student Accounts Objective](#) is a Planning Objective concerning compliance. The SPOL Objective contains a request for budget for EMV credit card scanners. Document, [Objective 2374 Budget Justification](#) is an example of the budget justification. Documents [EMV Chip Scanners](#) and [PCIDSS Compliance In HigherEd](#) are supporting documents to demonstrate the justification.

(5.A.3.) The strategic plan of the College, [2020 VISION](#), guides the planning and operations of the College and sets forth the following goals as strategic themes:

Excellent Student Service - The College will continue to make student success the top priority as we provide open access to high quality education at a reasonable cost. Therefore, we must continue to employ effective processes and develop better systems to serve our students efficiently.

High Quality Instruction - The College will continue to shape its culture by making learning our first priority and the driving force behind all initiatives, decisions, and policy development.

Learning Environment - The College will create a dynamic, safe and caring student-first physical learning environment that promotes open access to opportunities for all students of diverse backgrounds, and ensures their preparation for success in a global world.

Resource Development - The College will seek alternative funding sources and utilize resources in a responsible manner.

Student Enrollment, Retention, and Transfer - The College will continue to develop and improve student retention initiatives that align with a supportive infrastructure to provide the best possible outcome for our students to set and achieve their goals. Program completion and job placement rates are a measure of our commitment to student success.

Team Member Development - The College will build a team of highly skilled and trained individuals leading to an improved student learning culture, excellent services and more efficient operations.

Three Rivers College Strategic Themes that form 2020 VISION were developed by [a large group](#) from across the College, supported by the employees of the College, approved by the board, and are realistic based on facts used from actual findings from program data, College-wide review of College Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, the review of outputs and outcomes data, as well as the findings from the Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey (IPS) (administered to faculty and staff) and the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) (administered to students) that was completed as part of the strategic planning development process. The [IPS/SSI Combination Report](#) provides a strategic planning overview that included an executive summary of strengths and challenges. The details contained within the Noel-Levitz Executive Summary report provided action items that were used to create the 2020 VISION strategic themes and initiatives.

The realism of these themes is best demonstrated by the accomplishments shown in the [2016 Strategic Planning Accomplishment\(s\) Report](#) and the [2017 Strategic Planning Accomplishment\(s\) Report](#). The College has made great advancements in every area of the strategic plan since 2014. The Noel-Levitz SSI was repeated in 2016, and the combination IPS/SSI will be repeated during 2019 in preparation for the development of the next strategic plan.

TRC sets realistic and attainable performance benchmarks as outlined in [Institutional Benchmarking Executive Summary 2016-2018](#)

(5.A.4.) All Three Rivers College employees are appropriately qualified and trained. [Team Member Development](#) is a 2020 VISION Strategic Theme. Training is a continuous improvement effort to ensure the College meets the needs of the communities we serve by being malleable to new demands.

TRC ensures all staff members providing services to students are appropriately qualified upon hiring. The College hiring procedure ([PR 4170](#)) is utilized for all staff. Job descriptions are located and maintained in the Office of Human Resources and contain the essential functions for the position and the minimum qualifications used in the review process. [Sample job descriptions](#) for student services and tutoring services demonstrate the necessary skills to meet the requirements of each position. Each new [part-time](#) and [full-time](#) employee is provided a complete onboarding packet with an overview and schedule of the orientation, the mission, vision, and core values, and other necessary information to begin work. All full-time employees are required to attend a detailed [Orientation](#) as part of the onboarding process.

TRC employs competent faculty qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the College with appropriate credentials from a regionally accredited institution as stated in 3.C.2. As outlined in [IP](#) and [IR 6120 Faculty Credentialing](#), all general education faculty must have a minimum of a master's degree with eighteen graduate hours in the content area or a master's degree with an additional eighteen hours of discipline specific graduate work. Career and Technical Education faculty are generally expected to have at least a bachelor's degree, but they may have a combination of experience, academic credentials,

as well as appropriate professional licensure and certificates in the field, with verification of related occupational experience obtained within the most recent ten years or a state teaching certification in the area to be taught. Faculty teaching dual credit courses must have credentials equivalent to faculty teaching within the same discipline in an on-campus course.

A thorough credentialing process has been implemented to ensure that all full and part-time faculty are appropriately credentialed. The process begins with the Department Chair performing a careful screening of application materials to include application, vitae, and college transcripts. Upon approval by the Department Chair, a [Faculty Qualification Form](#) is completed which requires documentation of an applicant's qualifications including academic credentials, specialized training, and relevant experience which is then submitted to the Chief Academic Officer along with any supporting documentation for review and approval. The College President must grant final approval of credentials and initial the Faculty Qualification Form for an application packet to be complete. Updates to a credentialing file must follow the same process with the necessary documentation to support the update. Electronic copies of faculty curriculum vitas, licenses, certificates, as well as related experiential documentation, the [faculty credentialing certification](#), and semester teaching roster are all contained and maintained in the electronic [SPOL Credentialing Module](#).

As detailed in 3.C.4, remaining current, proficient, and effective in one's field is critical for faculty in their teaching role and is an institutional priority. [Fall 2017 Convocation Week Activities](#) provides an example of how the institution promotes professional development. Many of the activities are designed to provide faculty opportunities to refresh their knowledge regarding BlackBoard or SoftChalk. Faculty and staff are also provided opportunities through webinars such as [Go2Knowledge](#) and self-paced trainings such as [Quality Matters Trainings](#). Additionally, [Annual Training](#) is required by all staff.

In addition to faculty and staff advancing their own academic education, [professional development](#) is strongly encouraged by TRC and funds are allocated to encourage faculty and staff to pursue professional growth opportunities such as internal training, webinars and discipline [specific conferences](#) as indicated in professional development budget by department. Each department, as prescribed in [GAR 1140](#), annually reviews their zero-based budgets and requests funds for appropriate training; these approvals are granted on a case-by-case priority assessment.

The College has specialized training for the Title IX investigation team members. This training consists of attending regional multi-day meetings with trained experts as well as in-house training sessions to cover updates in the [process for investigating Title IX](#) claims. As shown by [Title IX Team Training](#), team members were provided relevant professional development training for their additional role at the institution.

Area-specific training is also provided. For example, staff and students working in the ACHIEVE Program receive training and support for their positions through various Federal Grant supported activities and in-house developed training and guides. The

Complete Learning Coaches Guide, the [ACHIEVE Peer Mentoring Program Manual](#), the [People to People Guide](#), and the ACHIEVE Manual all provide training, guidelines, and operational materials for those peer mentors working with TRC's 250 ACHIEVE students.

Tutors in the TLC undergo training developed by the tutoring staff to become a [certificated tutoring center](#) recognized by the College Reading and Learning Association as outlined in the [Tutor Manual](#).

Employees are eligible for tuition waivers per [page four of Benefits PR 4510](#). In addition, the College has a tuition discount or waiver program for our full-time faculty and staff to take courses with four-year universities located on our campus.

In support of continued professional development, the College encourages and recognizes [educational achievements](#). In August 2017, the College recognized thirteen (13) faculty and staff members at the annual Convocation program for educational achievements. In 2016, the College recognized eighteen (18) members for education achievements

(5.A.5.) Budget Development – College policy [FP3103 Budget Preparation and Adoption](#) outlines the budget development process, which begins with the annual planning retreat where each planning manager reviews the current year plan and begins to create goals and develop the continuous improvement plans for the next fiscal year with associated proposed budget requests. Each plan begins with goals from which [SMART Objectives](#) are developed in [Strategic Planning Online \(SPOL\)](#), which are tied to the annual planning priorities and the strategic plan. Funds requested for each planning improvement objective are categorized as enhancement and funds not tied to an objective through a planning objective are categorized as continuous operational requests, which are normal recurring expenses. The sum of enhancement requests and operational requests for each planning unit make up the total requested budget for the fiscal year.

Revenue projections are developed by the Financial Services Department with input from College departments that affect revenue for the year. [Tuition and Fee projections](#) are developed based on input from Enrollment Services and historic enrollment patterns. These projections are based on a predicted increase or decrease from the previous fiscal year (FY) in billed credit hours by residency status.

After the Tuition and Fee projections are determined, all other [revenue projections](#) are completed. This process looks at historical revenues and new information relevant to the current situation. Tuition and Fee projections are examined with the current registration trend for the upcoming year and adjusted as indicated. When both Tuition and Fee and all other projections are completed the institution has a revenue total to reconcile to requested expenses.

Budget Reconciliation - When revenue projections are less than requested expenses the College starts the process of reconciling the budget by informing the College Cabinet of the amount of shortfall. Cabinet members then request planning managers who report to

them to review their plan and reduce expenditures. If the reductions result in a balanced budget, the budget is submitted to the board for approval. If the budget still does not balance, a Budget Allocations Committee (BAC) is formed.

Employees selected for the BAC can vary but always consist of employees representing all areas of the College. The President, CFO, CAO and CSSO are always on the committee. The BAC reviews all planning units' expenses for reductions. The committee begins by reviewing all enhancement requests for each planning unit for accuracy of the expense and discussing the need of fund allocation for the Planning Unit Objective based on data, budget justifications, the College's strategic plan and annual planning priorities. The committee will also review operational budgets for all planning units for accuracy. The committee will continue the review of planning units until [expense requests](#) equal revenue projections.

The [balanced budget](#) is submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval. Once the board approves, the budget is communicated to all employees of the College and placed on the College website for public viewing.

Expense Monitoring - The College has multiple layers of expense monitoring. As described in [FR3810 Purchasing Approval](#), employees wishing to purchase a budgeted good or service must submit a [purchase request](#). The planning manager, who also serves as budget manager for their respective unit, must approve the [purchase order](#), then get approval from their cabinet member and final review and approval by the Financial Services Department.

The approved request is then reviewed by the purchasing department and if adequate budget is available, a [purchase order](#) is generated and the order placed. If adequate budget for the purchase does not exist, the purchase order is not generated and the manager must complete a [budget transfer](#), not complete the purchase, or receive permission from the President to deficit spend.

Revenue and expenses are compared to budgeted values on a monthly basis and presented to the board as part of the financial report. A detailed review is conducted midway through the fiscal year. If revenues are expected to fall short of projections or expenses are expected to exceed approved budget, a reconciliation process takes place. This process starts with financial services reviewing units' budgets for expense reductions. The initial stage of the process removes budgeted expenses for items known to be unneeded.

If a budget shortfall persists after known items have been removed, then the shortfall is [communicated](#) to the College Cabinet who instructs managers to identify items to be reduced or eliminated. If the amount reduced is adequate to balance the budget, the changes are accepted or a final stage of reconciliation occurs.

The final stage of reconciliation involves Financial Services identifying items to eliminate to balance the budget. Items identified are submitted to the President for review, revision,

and approval. The [amendments](#) are then submitted to the board for approval. If approved Financial Services amends the budget and communicates the amendments to budget managers.

If revenues exceed projections or if expenses are less than requested the College begins a process to allocate budget to requests eliminated during initial budget creation. The President and College Cabinet decide which requests are most beneficial to the strategic plan and funds are budgeted for those requests. Financial Services amends the budget and the amended budget is communicated to the SPOL Planning Unit Managers.

## Sources

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- 5.A.1. ITV Classrooms
- 5.A.1. Phone and email support
- 5.A.1. Revenue
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- 5.A.5. Communicated
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## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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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

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(5.B.1.) The Three Rivers College 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. The six member elected Board of Trustees meets monthly as described in [BP 0410 Trustee Meetings](#) and [BP 0411 Meeting Agenda](#). The board receives a [board book and agenda](#) prior to the meeting, which is also posted to the [College website](#).

The legal and fiduciary responsibilities of the board are met and established in College Policy ([BP 0510 Policy Development, Adoption and Review](#)), [evaluation of the College President](#) and through the monitoring of financial and performance data as shown through [Board Meeting Minutes](#).

The Board of Trustees receive a financial report, which is approved by vote, each month during the open session which outlines the previous month and year-to-date expenditures and actual-to-budgeted comparisons. The board also receives a monthly report from the College President and frequently academic leaders, faculty and staff present updates on academic programs, faculty and student activities to the board, as shown in the board meeting minutes.

[Board practices and policies](#) are outlined in duly adopted policy and are available on the College website.

(5.B.2. and 3.) Three Rivers College has developed an inclusive culture where information is freely shared and all internal constituencies have numerous opportunities to provide feedback and share in the creation of the path to the future.

The creation of the [College Strategic Plan](#) and the [College Master Facilities Plan](#) are two seminal examples of how internal constituencies are involved in the governance of the institution. In 2013, the College began the creation of the [Facilities Master Plan](#). During this process, faculty and staff provided input into the needs and future of the campus. In creation of this plan, many hours of discussion with faculty and staff resulted in a plan for the future. Great progress has been made in achieving the facilities plan and an update, which refines the future direction will be presented to the board in March of 2018 for approval.

In 2009 a large group, consisting of internal and external constituencies, was brought together to create a five-year strategic plan ([Vision 2015](#)) that would govern the operations of the institution. As Vision 2015 came to an end, a new group of faculty, staff, students, and external members were brought together to review the mission of the College, the progress made to date with Vision 2015, and to create a road map for the next five-year plan. The result was 2020 Vision, the current strategic plan of the College. One key example of engagement of internal constituencies is the administration and use of the [Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory and Institutional Priorities Survey Combination Report in 2014](#) in the creation of 2020 Vision. Through the use of this report all members of the internal College community had the opportunity to provide input and be engaged in setting the future direction of the College. The results of the survey served as one of the key data points in the determination of the six strategic themes.

2020 Vision is executed through the annual continuous improvement planning and budgeting process. Each year, all faculty and staff participate in the creation of continuous improvement plans tied to [2020 Vision](#) and the [annual planning priorities](#). The creation and implementation of [continuous improvement plans](#) are facilitated through Strategic Planning Online (SPOL), the College's planning, budgeting, assessment, and faculty credentialing software. Data is shared across all planning units through the [SPOL data libraries](#). The manner in which the College collaborates, uses data and [shares in decision making](#) exemplifies shared governance. Since the implementation of SPOL in 2010-11, more than 60 planning managers, responsible for 99 planning and budgeting units, have created over 3,000 continuous improvement objectives that serve to fulfill the mission and strategic plan of the College. The planning/budgeting cycle begins with the [Annual Planning Retreat](#), where progress on the strategic plan is discussed and all planning managers have the opportunity to provide input and offer suggestions on future projects and plans. Involvement by internal constituencies is further bolstered through the Continuous Improvement Leadership Team (CILT), which serves as a peer review team for planning managers, as outlined in the [Institutional Effectiveness Manual](#).

As outlined in [IR 6730 Faculty ByLaws](#), the faculty make rules and regulations for its governance and procedures as well as that of the students. The standing committees outlined therein, constitute one of the keys to faculty shared governance and provide oversight and engagement in all College instructional areas, faculty welfare, and matters involving students. Faculty serve as the voting members of the standing committees and

ex-officio members representing relevant parts of the College participate as non-voting members. The [standing committees](#) of the faculty are as follows:

**Executive Committee** – The executive committee consists of eight faculty members elected by their peers and is chaired by the chief academic officer. The committee may act for the faculty on matters needing immediate attention and is a conduit through which issues are brought forward to be addressed; it also works with the CAO to set the agenda for faculty meetings.

**Curriculum Committee** – The curriculum committee is comprised of eight elected members of the faculty and is chaired by the CAO. The committee is the central body that rules on changes to the curriculum prior to the items being presented to the faculty as a whole.

**Faculty Welfare, Evaluation, and Development Committee** – The committee is charged to recommend and study ways by which the intellectual and professional life and growth of faculty may be enhanced.

**Student Standing Committee** – The committee addresses issues related to [admission](#), readmission, student progress, graduation, and other student academic matters, and serves as a body of faculty to serve on appeals committees as outlined in [SP 2140](#) and [SR 2140 Student Appeals](#).

**Student Advisement and Retention** – The committee serves to enhance the advising and retention processes for students.

**Academic Policy, Regulations, and Procedures Committee** – The committee reviews academic policies, regulations, and procedures under development that impact students and the learning environment.

**Learning Resources Committee** – The committee makes recommendations to the faculty concerning the learning resources of the College including online course management systems and other distance learning resources and tools.

**Student Learning Improvement Committee** – The committee provides review and feedback on the student learning outcomes process.

**Ad hoc Committees** – Ad hoc committees may be created to address any issue as necessary.

The faculty are active in the governance of the College and have created, implemented, and approved numerous improvements in the operations of the College. A few significant examples of faculty initiatives include the creation and implementation of the faculty [evaluation and engagement system](#), the revision of the [academic fresh start](#) process, the creation and approval of revised [institutional outcomes](#), the review and approval of numerous academic and student [policies](#) and regulations, the setting of pre-requisites

and co-requisites for courses, and the redefining of curricular seat caps for courses. As a result of findings shown in the [Distance Learning Assessment Report](#), two committees of the faculty are engaged in the creation of distance learning manuals, which will become part of the [Faculty Handbook](#), covering instruction in online and ITV courses.

The College calendar committee is comprised of members from across the College and is charged with the important task of creating the schedule of the operations of the College.

Internal constituencies are engaged in the governance of the College in other ways as well. In 2015 and 2016, the College administered a campus climate survey to all faculty and staff. [External Location Semester Debriefs](#) are conducted where location directors report on successes and challenges. During this debrief, the College Cabinet and staff from every functional area of the College discuss operations and needed improvements and often agree to immediate actions resulting from the discussions. A [Monthly Open Forum](#) is held prior to the board meeting during the common hour. The forum is telecast to all faculty and staff not working on the Poplar Bluff campus to make participation convenient and to be as inclusive as possible. During the forum, the items in the Board Book and the President's report are discussed and ample time is provided to answer any and all questions faculty or staff may have. Those employees unable to attend have the opportunity to provide questions to be addressed. Each fall, the annual [Convocation](#) is held where all faculty and staff come together to discuss the state of the College and share information. During Convocation, the College President addresses the entire body with an update of accomplishments, progress on numerous activities and other items of import and note. Additionally, the President holds an open question and answer session where any item of interest can and frequently is, addressed.

The College Cabinet also serves a vital role in the involvement of internal constituencies. The College Cabinet is comprised of the College President, Dean of Student Services, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Technology Officer, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, Dean of Instruction, Director of Communications, Director of Human Resources, the Executive Assistant to the College President and a representative for external locations. The Cabinet is designed to be representative of every area of the College and is vital in the communication function to faculty and staff, enables cross functional coordination, and reviews and seeks solutions to both challenges and opportunities for improvement. To facilitate transparency, [Cabinet Minutes](#) are posted to the College Website.

Students are involved in setting requirements, policy and processes both actively and passively. Student representatives sat on the [Strategic Planning Committee shown on page 3 of 2020 Vision](#), Appeals Committees ([SP 2130](#) and [SR 2130 Student Grievance](#); [SP 2140](#) and [SR 2140 Student Appeals](#)), and various established task forces. The Student Government Association elicits student opinions and provides suggestions to the College Cabinet. In addition, students are surveyed multiple times throughout their tenure for both quantitative and qualitative analysis. [Student Surveys](#) include Registration, ROCS, Graduation, and the External Location Student Satisfaction

Survey. The results of these surveys are discussed and [utilized during planning](#), at the cabinet debriefing session, at the annual communications and recruitment meeting, and at the Annual Strategic Planning Retreat in January. Student satisfaction is the basis of one of the [College Institutional Benchmarks](#).

An example of active student involvement is when Student Government Association (SGA) polled student opinions about concerns on campus in 2016. After completing the poll, a significant concern with the largest percentage of response was “Trash on Campus”. SGA senators and the executive board discussed possible reasons and solutions. Together, the students determined that one possible cause was the lack of outside trash cans and the poor placement of existing trash cans. SGA presented a [proposal](#) to use a portion of their funds and a portion of the College’s funds to collaborate with the College to place 14 total outside trash cans in three phases. The College Cabinet heard their proposal and voted unanimously to approve the collaboration. Phase 1 and 2 of the trash cans have been completed. Currently, phase 3 is on hold until all construction and sidewalks are completed so continual movement of outside trash cans can be alleviated.

Another example of broad involvement centers around the creation, adoption, and implementation of the [Enrollment Management Plan](#) and the PSI advising system previously discussed in 3.D.3. The plan and advising system originated as a result of student feedback from surveys and focus groups and data on retention, completion, and student success. Numerous individuals from across the College, including External locations, Financial Services, Student Services, and a large number of faculty, worked together to create the plan and continue to work on implementation and refinement.

(5.B.3.) Included in 5.B.2.

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- 5.B.2 College Committees
- 5.B.2 Convocation
- 5.B.2 Enrollment Management Plan
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## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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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

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(5.C.1.) Three Rivers College engages in systematic and integrated planning. The College is preparing for the future through an ongoing planning process that is embedded as a part of its operational culture. TRC has embraced a culture of continuous improvement through a systematic planning process that [aligns goals and measurable objectives](#) with [annual planning priorities](#) and its strategic plan, [2020 VISION](#). The planning, budget development and assessment cycle are designed to support integrated and systematic strategic planning. The College uses an electronic planning system, [Strategic Planning Online \(SPOL\)](#) that fully supports [Institutional Effectiveness](#). The electronic planning system SPOL was implemented during the 2010-2011 academic year, and since that time the College has 65 SPOL Planning Unit Managers, 99 SPOL Planning and Budget Units and over 3,073 SPOL Planning Objectives.

TRC [allocates its resources](#) in alignment with its [mission and priorities](#). The College develops the annual budget using a zero-based budgeting model, [FP3103 Budget Preparation and Adoption](#). After collaborating and reviewing institutional data, as well as the prior year results from planning and assessment activities with their departmental teams, SPOL Planning Unit Managers develop their next FY budget requests for both ongoing operating expenses as well as enhancements for improvements, and [provide justification and documentation for both](#). All enhancement budget requests are linked to a [SPOL Planning Objective](#), which is developed to fulfill a departmental goal, and aligned to achieve an annual planning priority. These requests are tied to the five-year strategic plan to fulfill the overarching mission of the College.

Revenue estimates are based on known or projected state and federal appropriations and grants, local tax assessments, tuition rates and fees, and projected enrollment. Once

revenue projections are established, the budget requests are reviewed by a Budget Allocations Committee comprised of key personnel from across the College to begin prioritizing requests and balancing the budget. Proposed budgets progress through the [approval process](#), from the planning unit manager collaborating with their supervisor, to cabinet member, and on to the Budget Allocations Committee and ultimately to the College President, Chief Financial Officer and the Board of Trustees for final approval

Throughout the year, Planning Unit Managers have online real-time access to view their SPOL planning activities and budgets, which include their actual expenses and encumbrances, through the College budget system and SPOL. Once approved by the Board of Trustees, the budget in SPOL is locked by the CFO until the next planning and budget cycle begins. The approved budget in SPOL is uploaded into the College finance system. Through the College finance system, managers have a limited ability to transfer funds from line item to line item within their department. Other budget transfers require further approval by a Cabinet Member and President. This preserves the integrity of the SPOL plans and budgets initially developed for that planning year, while still providing the flexibility to respond to changing situations.

(5.C.2.) Three Rivers College links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting. TRC has developed a systematic and comprehensive process to embed assessment throughout its operations [Diagram of Data Informed Decision Making](#). Sharing of data and best practices is encouraged and [rewarded](#) at Three Rivers. The College evaluates its services and uses the findings from its assessment to [improve operations](#). Results from assessment and planning efforts are used to [justify proposed budget requests](#).

The College [evaluates its operations](#) and services [on a regular basis](#) as shown in the TRC [Institutional Effectiveness Manual](#). Assessment and evaluation also occurs as a result of findings that may require additional information through [Focus Group Interviews](#) or specific [Surveys](#) designed to answer a question. Planning Managers often request these assessments from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Results from planning and assessment activities are recorded in [Actual Results and Use of Results](#) as a part of the strategic planning structure used by the College and are part of the Objective design in the [SPOL electronic planning system](#). Through [electronic data Libraries](#), SPOL houses the institutional data and assessment reports that result from strategic planning. The results from operational objectives may lead to the [use of actual results requiring a revised or newly developed College Policy or Regulation](#).

The [Continuous Improvement Leadership Team \(CILT\)](#), [evaluates](#) college-wide planning efforts to ensure the planning [objectives are measurable](#), use data informed approaches to planning and align with the strategic plan and annual planning priorities of the College. Feedback is provided to the planning manager for improvement, and CILT members may also suggest additional data reports or specialized assessment instruments to better inform planning and continuous improvement efforts.

The [Student Learning Improvement Committee \(SLIC\)](#), [evaluates SLO assessment efforts](#) to ensure alignment of outcomes with program outcomes (mapping), as well as results and use of results to improve student learning. Feedback is provided to the faculty

program manager for improvement, and [SLIC members](#) may also suggest additional assessment methods, and the use of multiple assessment measures used to enhance the outcomes data that may lead to improved student learning efforts.

Faculty are involved in the planning, assessment and budget development activities of the College through their departments. Department Chairs work with their respective Faculty to gather budgetary requests and to address specific program needs. Each [Program Manager](#) uses Strategic Planning Online (SPOL), to developed their goals, [planning objectives and budgets for the next FY](#). Assessment results from planning, SLO activities and [Program Review](#) may have an impact on budgetary needs and resource allocation.

The [Budget Allocations Committee \(BAC\)](#) reviews proposed budget requests to ensure data- informed decisions are made regarding enhanced budget requests. Specifically, the BAC makes preliminary decisions to prioritize proposed budget requests to ensure alignment with the next FY Annual Planning Priorities of the College and resource capacity. For BAC to consider each proposed budget request, the operational process for budget development must include a planning objective and written justification for each enhanced budget request included in the [task line of an actionable Objective in SPOL](#). If deemed necessary, additional data to support a proposed budget item may be requested from the planning manager.

The strategic plan guides resource allocation in the annual budget to ensure alignment of capacity and resources in SPOL. The College is committed to making fiscal sustainability a priority through key areas of need. [Resource Development](#) is a 2020 VISION Strategic Theme as well as an Annual Planning Priority is [Maximize Fiscal Resources and Opportunities](#): *The College will continue to actively seek training opportunities for non-credit populations in business, industry, and methods of reducing costs while operating efficiently so that the use of resources yield the maximum results. The College will continue to focus on the acquisition of funding from both public and private sources in a targeted manner to move strategic projects forward for the improvement of the College and the success of the students.*

TRC uses a [zero-based budget model](#) designed to ensure fiscally conservative approaches to planning and resource development. Each year the College begins to plan and budget with zero dollars allocated, and truly develops the budget based on the actual immediate needs for the next fiscal year (FY). The College integrates budgeting, planning and assessment as well as the forward use of results in planning through a documented process in our electronic Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) software. The SPOL budget development process and documents include the entire TRC budget, associated planning objectives as well as [justification](#) documents for every planning unit.

(5.C.3) Three Rivers College has employed a systematic and integrated continuous improvement planning process that is comprehensive and takes into account the perspectives of both internal and external constituents. The planning process begins with the five-year College strategic plan, [2020 Vision](#), which was created by a large group from

across the College and included external representatives and student input. The [Facilities Master Plan](#), and the [update](#) to the plan also serve to guide annual planning and were created with wide-ranging input from College employees and external constituents. The strategic plan and the facilities master plan provide the foundation for the annual continuous improvement planning process as shown in the [Institutional Effectiveness Manual](#) and in [GAP 1140](#) and [GAR 1140 Institutional Effectiveness](#), which begins with the annual College strategic planning retreat.

The [annual strategic planning retreat](#) brings together the 65 planning managers of the College, who are roughly 1/3 of the full-time employees of the College, to review the mission, vision, core values, and the [accomplishments towards the strategic plan](#). The Office of Institutional Effectiveness leads the planning event, provides direction to the planning managers and compiles the findings from institutional assessments and data in the form of reports. A [plethora of data reports](#) are provided to each planning manager on a flash drive to guide in their planning efforts during the retreat and throughout their planning cycle. These data reports include: enrollment, retention, graduation, student feedback surveys, programmatic assessment data, strategic planning accomplishments and [institutional benchmarks](#). Customized data reports that provide specific data are given to each external location director, each department and each program manager depending on their functional area and College purpose. During the planning cycle, each planning unit manager uses the electronic planning tool, [Strategic Planning Online \(SPOL\)](#) to develop goals and measurable objectives to guide them in the creation of their action plans and assessment measures which ultimately informs their proposed budget needs for the next fiscal year (FY).

Following the planning retreat, the participants continue to plan with input from their team and unit members, as guided by the [Annual Planning Priorities](#). The annual continuous improvement plan objectives for each planning unit are [tied to the annual planning priorities and the strategic plan](#). The continuous improvement plans are created with involvement by internal constituents and input from external stakeholders. Input from external constituents is gained through the use of advisory committees for occupational programs, meetings with high school counselors and superintendents, involvement with area chambers of commerce, the Three Rivers Endowment Trust Board, memberships in area civic organizations, the College architect Dille and Traxel, the College Board of Trustees, and area business and industry through local training groups and are workforce investment boards to ensure the goals and action plans address the strategic plan and the needs of the communities served by TRC and thus fulfilling the College Mission. Through the planning process, the institutional budget is created for the next FY, ensuring that the resources of the College are aligned with the strategic plan and the annual planning priorities.

Key elements of the systematic and ongoing continuous improvement planning method is the inclusion of all stakeholders and the alignment of the plans to the annual planning priorities and the strategic plan. By ensuring this alignment exists, the College aligns the use of its resources with the execution of the College strategic plan to fulfill its Mission.

(5.C.4.) Three Rivers College (TRC) plans for fluctuations in revenue through the College's budgeting and planning process. The basis for all planning is the College Mission, [2020 VISION](#), the [Annual Planning Priorities](#), and the [Facilities Master Plan](#). Each year, TRC considers numerous [data sources](#), as well as accomplishments and annual planning priorities as detailed throughout Section 5.C. Specific consideration is given to fluctuations in sources of revenue during the process of revenue projection planning as detailed in 5.A.5. As discussed in 5.A.1, the majority of revenue comes from Tuition and Fees (46%), state appropriations (22%), and local tax support (8%).

TRC uses a zero-based budgeting method to develop the budget, which allows flexibility in managing expenses by requiring planning unit managers to plan for the next FY based on their actual needs and focus on the amount of budget requested with a justification for the proposed budget as well. The unit plan as well as the written justification for a proposed budget item is a tool used by the College's appropriations committee to determine the need for a budget line item relative to the line item's importance to the annual planning priorities and the strategic plan. Depending on the type of item requested, the Budget Appropriations Committee may request [additional information](#) and data to support an enhanced request.

When determining revenue projections for the year, several sources are used including figures directly from state government appropriations, prior-year encumbrances (used and unused to date), communication from peer community Colleges, and information from Missouri Community Colleges Association. The College establishes its Tuition and Fee projections with rates used for a five-year [tuition plan](#) approved by the Board of Trustees in 2015, and then adjusted based on the most current information. Having a long range plan for Tuition and Fee rates allows the College flexibility when determining overall revenue and was intentionally instituted as one methodology to cope with revenue fluctuations. The rates approved a maximum to be charged to students based on their residency. When deciding the actual rate to charge, factors such as availability of financial aid and credit hour cost of similar institutions are considered compared to what revenues are needed based on the outlook for revenue fluctuation. A significant part of the evaluation to establish [Tuition and Fee projections](#) uses information provided by enrollment services and reviewing billing trends from the previous semesters. This allows a careful examination of enrollment patterns as part of the revenue planning process and utilizes information concerning the current national, state and local economic conditions and high school graduation class size as predominate factors to predict enrollment and associated revenue. In years credit hours are expected to decrease, the amount of revenue lost can be mitigated by increased tuition rates granted through the tuition plan.

When revenue is predicted to decrease, the College will emphasize a planning priority of [maximizing fiscal resources](#). Objectives are created by unit managers with the focus of [reducing costs for efficient operations](#) or increasing revenue as shown in Student's Accounts [Objective 1872](#).

Fluctuations in revenue are also considered in the monitoring of the budget throughout the fiscal year for any surpluses or shortfalls. In the event of a shortfall attempts are made to locate additional revenue sources to fill the deficit. If additional revenue sources cannot

be located, planning unit managers are asked for voluntary cuts to the budget. If voluntary cuts are not sufficient to fill the deficit the Financial Services Division makes recommendations on budget items to cut to submit to the College President as detailed in 5.A.5.

(5.C.5.) Three Rivers College recognizes that we operate in a constantly changing environment and has created a systematic and integrated planning process to take this into account. The College has developed a culture of assessment and improvement and utilizes a continuous improvement planning methodology as outlined in the [Institutional Effectiveness Manual](#). Under this methodology, each Planning Unit of the College considers emerging trends relevant to its operations in its planning. This methodology has enabled the College to develop a strong foundation from which it can take advantage of opportunities and meet the challenges of emerging trends.

The development of both [VISION 2015](#) and the current [2020 VISION](#), the College's current strategic plan, was focused on where the College was and what the road map to the future looked like. The strategic themes were all established while examining emerging trends and factors and considering focal points to best prepare the College to meet the future needs of the communities served.

Two seminal examples of planning in an environment of change is the recent update to the [Facilities Master Plan](#), where achievements of the original plan were considered as well as the long-term outlook of needs for the future were considered in determining the priorities for next steps as well as the [Technology Plan](#). The TRC Technology Plan was created with the very idea of the changing environment and uses the continuous improvement planning methodology with the stated purpose to support the College Mission by ensuring that technology resources are sufficient, and remain sufficient, for the needs of the College's strategic/master plan and for the needs of College personnel and students. The plan was developed by:

- Reviewing existing resources to ensure we have sufficient computing/technological resources to support existing student needs (current).
- Reviewing past technology upgrades (where we've been).
- Reviewing future student needs and examining new technologies to ensure the College will be able to meet needs for the foreseeable future (Where we're going).
- Attempting to provide a 3-5 year roadmap for future services/technologies.
- Providing a path for keeping College resources current.
- Ensuring the College data is adequately protected from disasters and that a plan is in place in the event of a disaster.

The technology plan is the culmination of an in-depth process that involves strategic thinking, research on IT and higher education trends, and many discussions about student needs, and technology needs within the College community and establishes the technology priorities for the next 3-5 years. The Technology and Computer Services Department actively engages in the discovery of emerging technologies and has developed a [training plan](#) to address emerging trends.

Another example of adapting to change and anticipation of emerging trends is the change in the way the College reaches out and communicates with current and potential students. In anticipation of a growing trend away from radio and television, the College developed a [digital campaign](#) that takes into account the current trends in communication. Since 2016, TRC has been reaching out to prospective students using the new technologies of digital advertising and has a social media presence. Both types of advertising are easier to track and provide more data than traditional television and radio ads. This approach allows the College to take into account changes in student tastes and preferences and demographic shifts. Current discussions focus on a greater emphasis on the utilization of other social media platforms.

A further example of planning for emerging trends was the upgrading of the [Interactive Television Classrooms \(ITV\)](#). After examining the ITV technology that was being used and making determinations about both the technology and how the technology will be used the decision was made to invest in upgraded technology to meet the future needs of our students and curriculum.

Online courses have grown as an emerging student preferred modality and the need to support student learning has been carefully considered and greatly improved over recent years. An examination of the trends within our own student population and performance that resulted in the inclusion of online technologies in the TRC' s Title III, Strengthening Institutions Grant that resulted in a complete redesign of the online course offerings. In another significant effort to improve access and student success, the College has developed a quality system that requires all faculty teaching online courses to be [Quality Matters \(QM\) trained](#) and [reviewed](#). Currently, all online courses have either been completely revised and reviewed or are in the process, using the QM framework. To date, 6 online courses have been [nationally reviewed](#) and an initial study on [student success rates](#) and persistence shows significant improvement. Discussions have begun on the future of online learning at TRC and center around support systems needed to further improve offerings and an identification of student needs in those areas.

Emerging trends in the business and industry sector have also been considered and changes made to adapt to the future. [New programs](#) in Welding, Advanced Manufacturing, Practical Nursing, and Agriculture have been developed to meet these trends. TRC also works closely with area businesses when trends are revealed and has partnered with them on [major training programs](#) to create new jobs and retain existing jobs as well as conducting [customized training](#) to increase skills of the existing workforce. Even more recently, an emerging trend in [Apprenticeships](#) has been identified and partnerships are being developed with local business and industry to create programs designed to address the need for a trained and skilled workforce.

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## 5.D - Core Component 5.D

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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

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(5.D.1.) Three Rivers College works systematically to improve its performance. [The Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#) facilitates mission-centric practices in College operations and facilitates processes that lead to continuous improvement with all functional units of the College. The office is the hub for assessment practices, development of [data sharing](#), strategic planning, policy and regulation development, and for College-wide quality improvement efforts. The Institutional Effectiveness website provides reports and resources regarding annual reporting measures, benchmark data, policies and regulations, information on quality initiatives, and strategic planning. These data and reports are made available to internal and external constituencies. Through the transparency of the College website, faculty, staff, students, and members of area communities have open access to College financial data, accreditation reports, and assessment of student learning, strategic planning, and the results of benchmarking.

The purpose of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness is to provide institutional support in the development of quality planning, assessment, and data analysis processes across all programs and to align these activities with best practices. The office supports student performance efforts by providing administration, faculty, and staff with quality information, planning and assessment methodology regarding student learning, and [program planning](#) in areas targeted by the faculty so programmatic adjustments can be most effective. At Three Rivers College, the ultimate measure of institutional success is student success. Every department at the College exists to support student learning. [Strategic planning and assessment processes](#) are fully integrated and shared through an electronic system known as Strategic Planning Online (SPOL). The Dean of Institutional Effectiveness serves as the SPOL system administrator. The SPOL system has several [Document Libraries](#) that provide support for planning, assessment and [budget development activities](#) as well as shared viewing access for all with system access. TRC develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations in an ongoing and “real time” manner through the SPOL system. Numerous College outputs and outcomes reports are also shared through the Institutional Effectiveness webpage.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness has developed a number of internal and external reports including annual reports made available through the IE web page. College-wide

data is shared and used for individual departments and operating areas and are used to change and improve operations. [Numerous examples](#) of improvements can be cited because the College culture is highly focused on continuous improvement planning and using data-informed decision making in operations as well as budget development. Additionally, customized reports from focus group interviews, departmental surveys, and cohort data requests are continually added and shared through the College Cabinet and departmental meetings.

Three Rivers College documents evidence of performance in academic and non-instructional programs across all departments. [Continuous improvement planning](#) in SPOL supports the development of College operations. Each planning unit manager is responsible for monthly progress reports and status reports on milestones. These operational reports are made available to the supervisor responsible for oversight of each unit and SPOL provides access to each direct report at the departmental level for day-to-day management and oversight of operations. The SPOL system provides access and a reporting structure [that aligns](#) with the [TRC organizational structure](#).

The [Continuous Improvement Leadership Team \(CILT\)](#) is purposely comprised of the power users of institutional data: SIS System Administrator, Director of Enrollment Services and Student Development, Assessment Coordinator, Comptroller and the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness. The [CILT reviews](#) the planning units of individual planning unit managers and shares data to provide guidance and feedback on continuous improvement goals and objectives.

The TRC [Student Learning Improvement Committee \(SLIC\)](#) provides support to the academic units of the College by meeting as a forum for faculty to present the findings of their student learning outcomes and program review assessment reports. SLIC uses an [evaluation rubric](#) to guide faculty by providing valuable feedback reports and suggestions for improvement. Faculty use this experience to learn and improve in their assessment operations. SLIC also acts as a sounding board for academic, institutional, and operational challenges, and provides a voice for faculty concerns that are communicated to the Faculty Executive Committee and then to the faculty-at-large.

The College has a strong commitment to [benchmarking](#) against itself, external organizations, and comparative cohorts of colleges. [IPEDS](#) cohorts are routinely used to evaluate key measures including cost of attendance, enrollment, graduation rates, and other key operating data. TRC provides a comprehensive view of institutional data found in [FastFacts](#) and the [College Factbook](#) which is available on the Institutional Effectiveness web page.

Results from institutional assessments and [surveys](#) have guided planning and improvement efforts over the past ten years. Data reports are used in operational planning to improve performance and can be found in [SPOL Planning Objectives](#) and are attached in each respective [Planning Objective Library](#).

The College participated in the [Noel Levitz Survey of Student Satisfaction Inventory \(SSI\)](#) and used the [Institutional Priorities Survey \(IPS\)](#) to inform the development of the 2020 VISION. Data from the SSI also provided the basis for the [TRC Enrollment Management Plan](#). The SSI is administered on a two-year cycle allowing for administration in the fall semester of the third year. [NCLEX results](#) allow for comparison for TRC nursing student outcomes against regional and national results. The use of the NCLEX learning outcomes data is mapped and [curricular changes](#) that improved TRC nursing outcomes are shown in this example.

(5.D.2.) Three Rivers College learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts. The College leadership, faculty, and staff are firmly committed to using information from operations as the foundation for [improving performance](#). Evidence in support of this can be found in hundreds of examples across the College.

One example of learning from operational experience can be seen in the Technology and Computer Services Department during FY 11-12. Technology & Computer Services set out to evaluate and improve the standard and quality of work done, and improve customer satisfaction by creating quality assurance guidelines. At the time, there was not an assessment system in place to ensure our students, faculty, and staff were updated on the status of their work request(s) in a timely manner or with accurate and thorough ticket notes. Nor was there an efficient way to ensure tickets were appropriately prioritized. This first step to improving was setting up Spiceworks software, an open source ticketing system with greater functionality that would allow computer technicians and department managers to better track technical support ticket statuses.

The added functionality of Spiceworks did help to improve ticket completion times and ticket prioritization, but there was still no easy way to assess the quality of the work, and the technicians still weren't communicating effectively with the user. The department realized that a quality assurance standard needed to be created.

An initial meeting was held by the computer services team. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and establish initial guidelines and target indicators for work order processing. Two types of Quality Assurance (QA) checks were developed to measure these standards, one to be performed daily and one to be performed weekly. ([See 5.D.2.FY.12.13.Workorder.Guideline.Meeting.Notes.DM.2017.10.26](#))

The QA checks had two major flaws. One – it took too long to perform the checks. They were performing multiple types of checks and although these checks were useful, they were very labor intensive. Two - the feedback loop was not timely, nor useful as there was no useful way to compile the data for easy viewing. As an improvement, a more complete QA process was established and performed inside of the ticket system itself. This allowed deficient tickets to be kicked back to the technicians to correct their notes, or review for improvement.

In an effort to provide timely feedback, in FY-14 the department began weekly meetings in which the technology team discussed assessment issues, planning issues, operational issues, and procedure/guideline (quality assurance) compliance issues. They learned that adding this feedback loop raised the likelihood that technicians would comply with the measures as it called out deficiencies openly to the peer group. During this planning year, the department established that the “QA Process” was becoming a success. ([See 5.D.2.FY.13.14.Weekly.Meeting.DM.2017.10.26](#))

After a year of evaluating the new QA procedures, they still found that the QA reporting was simply not good enough for long-term reporting, assessment, and data analysis. Every department member agreed that the immediacy of the feedback loop drew attention to unsatisfactory work, but an established criterion to prove actual improvements needed to be created. The QA program was a small success but it was imperative that the department devise a long-term reporting scheme that was not time consuming and would allow for the tracking of historical data. ([See 5.D.2.FY.14.15.Work.Order.QA.Guidelines.DM.2017.10.26.](#))

During FY-16 the department focused on refining the long-term reporting component and used that to track QA trends. ([See 5.D.2.FY.15.16.Work.Order.Guidelines.Historical.DM.2017.10.26](#)) The goal was to generate long term reporting on the fly using the reporting capabilities in Spiceworks. This involved modifying the Spiceworks system by building in QA indicators into the ticket system itself. This helped the department build reports that could be generated on the fly as needed, better filled the long-term analysis needs, and enabled them to show improvement or failure to improve on an annual and possibly month-by-month basis. By pulling data from the ticket system, they could identify trends in the QA process period of reporting. This would allow them to analyze the trend after implementing the new reports and standards. In order to emphasize the importance of the QA standards, they added a component to the process in which the chief technology officer (CTO) performed the QA checks. ([See 5.D.2.FY.15.16.Work.Order.QA.Guidelines.DM.2017.10.26](#))

The department headed into FY 16-17 knowing this would be the last year for the QA project as it would be complete and fully implemented. This fiscal year was also the first year they had complete reports from every month. This allowed the department to identify trends and find where they were the most weak. After all reports were generated, they noticed increases in quality of work performed based on the active QA feedback loop. T&CS evaluates these standards every year to ensure the process identifies weak areas, and that the process to improve them are reasonable. Even during peak work load periods, the standards are not lowered. This helps them measure departmental capacity and quality of work, and challenges the team to maintain the same standards of work as during normal work load periods.

In summation, over a period of several years the T&CS Department established a quality assurance process, then refined it. Experience taught them that for a QA process to be effective:

- The QA checks cannot be labor intensive.
- Documentation must be easy to maintain.
- Timely reporting cannot be not labor intensive.
- There must be a timely feedback loop.
- Must be made a high priority by leadership.

By developing this process over a period of years, the department learned much more than if it had put in a perfect quality assurance process the first time. This shows the department can implement a process, review that process, and then refine it based on feedback to end up with a quality product. More importantly, the process itself greatly improved how we served users and their overall satisfaction in the areas focused on.

Before the quality assurance guidelines were established the techs did an excellent job of “fixing” problems, but failed in the areas of doing the little things that make the user happy. Once the guidelines were established specifically to address those issues, they then started surveying the end users for their feedback. The results from the 2016 and 2017 surveys show they are trending very high in user satisfaction in the areas we established QA criteria on. All of the areas listed below go through a QA process:

- The time it takes a technician to respond to a newly-opened ticket is appropriate.
- The technician updates my ticket with timely notes.
- The amount of information the technician puts on my ticket (to keep me informed of its status) is appropriate.
- The technician is courteous and respectful.
- The time it takes to resolve my ticket is appropriate.

Out of the users who responded to the survey and used the ticket system, a satisfaction rating of over 95% was seen in the areas they focused on improving.

[\(See Question 7 \(Q7\) for both surveys in attached document 5.D.2.FY.16.and.17.Technology.Surveys.DM.10.31.17\).](#)

Another excellent example of how the institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve is through academic assessment. The College has successfully completed two HLC Assessment Academy improvement projects since 2008. The result of the first 5-year academy was positive and provided a workable product to assess. Upon evaluation of these assessment processes, it was determined that the data collection method was cumbersome and the data was not reliable. TRC began and [successfully completed](#) a second 3-year academy to improve upon the College-wide outcomes assessment and to develop a comprehensive program review process. The faculty named this project: [Assessment and Program Review for Improved Learning \(APRIL\).](#)

The [implementation](#) of Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) is another example of how TRC learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, both overall and in its

component parts. The last HLC decennial review of TRC revealed inadequacies in the College's planning and assessment processes. There was weak evidence of assessment, data-informed decision making and strategic planning. The College began a [journey to compliance](#) that led to the [dedication of resources](#), professional development and numerous improvements to support Institutional Effectiveness. The following are just a few of these improvements: a successful [HLC Focused Visit](#), the forming of a fully staffed Office of Institutional Effectiveness, purchasing of the electronic software Strategic Planning Online (SPOL), the implementation of SPOL, numerous trainings and conferences, ongoing technology upgrades, and dedicated resources to support these efforts. Currently, TRC has over 60 competent SPOL Planning Unit Managers, 99 SPOL Planning and Budget Units and over 3,000 planning objectives in SPOL.

Embedded into the operational fabric of Three Rivers College is a culture that embraces a philosophy of learning from its operational experiences and applying that learning to improve institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and the sustainability of all component parts. The College desires to fulfill its Mission in an exemplary manner to not only meet accreditation criteria but to also fulfill the mission and draw closer to the stated vision that: *Three Rivers College will be the preeminent, cutting-edge community of learners with a student-first focus, and will operate as a vibrant, dynamic catalyst for the creation of opportunities that foster learning and student success.*

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## **5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary**

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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**

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Three Rivers College has a systematic, ongoing continuous planning system that allows the College to make data-informed decisions about strategic allocations of resources to improve its performance. The continuous improvement planning model is an effective means of aligning the mission, vision, and core values of the College with the strategic and operational plans. The College has embraced a culture of data-informed decision making, planning and assessment and is committed to improving its operations and educational offerings to best benefit our students.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*