

Middle States Commission on Higher Education



MSCHE Self-Study Draft

Tompkins Cortland Community College

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Introduction

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded in 1968, Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) is one of 30 community colleges within the State University of New York (SUNY) system dedicated to providing high-quality open-access post-secondary education and contributing to the development of an educated citizenry and workforce. The College, which is accredited by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), celebrated 50 years at our main campus in Dryden, NY, in the Fall of 2024. We are located in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, where we are sponsored by Tompkins and Cortland Counties. While most of our students come from our sponsor and surrounding counties, our residential program allows us to host students from NY counties beyond our region, from outside of NY state, and from around the world. TC3 continues to be an important economic engine for the Tompkins Cortland service area, with its full-time and part-time employees and student and alumni contributions to the region having an impact of approximately \$65.4 million in FY 2021-22 and supporting 830 jobs regionally (0.1).

TC3 is governed by a Board of Trustees (BOT) consisting of representatives of both Tompkins and Cortland Counties, appointed by either the respective county legislature or the governor. The BOT also includes a student trustee, elected by the student body. The College's administrative leadership consists of the President and an Executive Council (consisting of five Vice Presidents, and a Chief Advancement Officer) that reports to the President (0.2) (p.1-2). TC3 employs 311 staff and faculty, with 193 being full-time and 118 being part-time (Fall 2024), who are represented by four distinct labor unions. The athletic program and some student support services are supported by employees of the Faculty Student Association (FSA) (35 full-time and 44 part-time). The College Senate is a key shared governance body at the campus, on which both faculty and staff serve. Both the FSA Board and the College Senate include student representation. In addition, students are represented through their Student Government Association (SGA) (0.2) (p.3). The faculty are currently in the process of forming a Faculty Senate, with an Executive Committee and representation from each of our academic communities, to oversee and receive reports from the Academic Assessment, Academic Policy, Curriculum, and Tenure and Promotion committees.

TC3 is financially supported through tuition and funding from New York State (NYS) and from our sponsoring counties. In New York, non-sponsor counties provide additional revenue through "chargebacks" for NYS students who live outside our sponsor counties. The College also receives financial support from the TC3 Foundation, an independent, non-profit charitable organization founded in 1971. The Foundation raises, invests, and administers private funds to benefit TC3 students, faculty, and staff.

MISSION

As a community college, TC3 is an open access institution that—per its recently (2025) re-affirmed Mission—serves our community by fostering lifelong inquiry in our students, leading them to meaningful work, economic growth, and brighter futures. Our vision is to be an engine of economic, personal, and social vitality in our region by providing innovative educational pathways that equip students with the skills and experience for success. Our Institutional Values are Excellence, Inclusion, Community, Connection, Integrity and Accountability, and Equity.

Our academic values are reflected in our Institutional Learning Outcomes:

- *Communicate effectively, in oral and written forms, taking into consideration audience and purpose.*
- *Apply principles and methods of scientific inquiry and quantitative reasoning appropriate to their discipline.*
- *Use information, critical thinking, and the creative process to solve problems and reach conclusions.*
- *Use technology appropriate to their discipline.*
- *Describe the ways in which social, economic, or environmental sustainability depends on their own and the collective contributions of a diversity of ideas and people.*

PROGRAMS OF STUDY

At TC3, we offer our students several educational pathways and important co-curricular experiences such as internships and study abroad experiences. Credit-bearing associate degree programs (associates for transfer and direct to workforce), microcredentials, and certificates form the core of the on-campus and online offerings. Table 1 shows our top 5 academic programs by 2025 enrollment. Our college in high school program (CollegeNow) allows school-aged students to pursue college credits, and our non-credit programs align to workforce training needs in the local area.

Table 1. Top 6 programs based on 2025 enrollment (data source: SEP dashboard).	
Program	Fall 2025 Enrollment
General Studies (A.S.)	409
Nursing (A.A.S.)	173
Business Administration (A.S., A.A.S.)	124
Chemical Dependency Counselling (A.A.S)	88
Human Services (A.S., A.A.S.)	57
Social Science (A.S.)	30

STUDENT PROFILE

Our core credit-bearing population (Fall 2024) includes students aged 19-24 (60%) and those who are post-traditional (40%). A significant percentage are eligible for Pell (Fall 2024 = 52.7%) or more in most years), while first-generation students are more than 30% (Fall 2024 = 35.7%) student population. Our students broadly represent the demographics of our area, with 62.2% of Fall 2024 core students identifying as White. Hispanic and African American students represent the second- and third-largest groups respectively, at 13.5% and 9.4% (0.3) (p.8). About 16.6% of our student population lives in residential dormitories on campus.

TC3's CollegeNow program is a significant presence in our community, helping to expand access to post-secondary opportunities. Its concurrent enrollment program, which makes up the largest part of CollegeNow's enrollment, has been recognized for quality through accreditation by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) since 2009. Additional early college offerings include special cohorts developed in partnership with area school districts: a co-located and NYSED funded Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) that allows students to complete their high school diploma and associate's degree within six years in specified pathways; two Smart Scholars Early College High School programs that support students in the completion of at least 24 college credits while in high school; and

Early Degree, which advises students wishing to complete an associate’s degree while in high school. In Fall 2025, CollegeNow enrolled 3153 high school students in 16,500 college credits, accounting for 65.3% of the College’s registered students and 46% of the College’s FTE’s (Figure 1), thus explaining the College’s 2025 “Medium” Carnegie classification.

Like many community colleges, TC3’s degree programs experienced enrollment challenges during the pandemic. However, we have made significant strides re-invigorating our student enrollment. In Fall 2024, the College enrolled 1,640 college-going students (“core” students) in credit classes (Figure 1), making for a third straight year of increasing core enrollments post-pandemic. Those students were mostly enrolled full-time (59%), with the majority residing in our sponsor counties (50-55%), and the second-largest population (20-25%) from the 9 neighboring counties (referred to as our “donut” counties). Another 10-12% of students come from other counties in New York State, with the remainder being from other states and abroad. One of the consequences of the pandemic has been a significant decrease in student enrollment from the New York City metropolitan area, previously a source of enrollment growth.

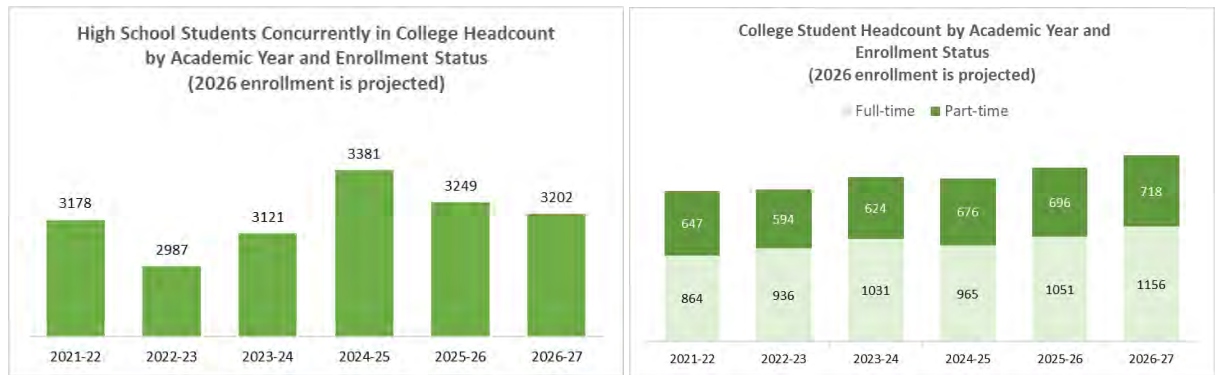


Figure 1. Student headcount by academic year and enrollment status. The chart on the left shows College core enrollment and projected core enrollment for 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years. The chart on the right represents high school enrollment.

Despite this progress in growing the College’s enrollment, we remain below pre-pandemic levels. To help mitigate the budgetary implications of lower enrollment, a major focus of the College has been on increasing retention. Through the development of a more coordinated and comprehensive communication plan with existing students, recent efforts at improving academic advising, and redesigning the one-stop Panther Welcome Center services, we have made progress at increasing retention in recent years, though compared to our peers, first-time full-time fall-to-fall retention is considerably lower, indicating potential for improvement (Table 2). As a result, the College has set a goal to increase the overall retention rate by 2% each year with additional goals for Pell recipients and other subgroups. See the more detailed discussion of the Strategic Enrollment Plan below for more information.

Table 2. Fall to Fall Retention (%) (FTFT) (0.10)				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
TC3 (College Data: Retention)	44.4	39.6	48.8	51.9
TC3 (IPEDS: Retention and Completion)	48.3	42.2	49.9	
Peer Benchmarking (IPEDS Retention and Completion)	57	57	58	

Per New York State projections, the number of high school graduates in New York State is projected to drop by nearly 4% (-7,595) by 2030. Locally, that decline is expected to be 5% (-55) in the sponsor counties and 4% (-418) within our donut counties. These changes present a challenge as TC3 traditionally has relied upon traditional age students for the bulk of its enrollment. Additionally, TC3's own data analysis indicates an increasing percentage of local traditional-age students are enrolling at four-year colleges that are competing with community colleges to maintain their own enrollment levels. At the same time, internal data analysis projects a 57% increase in the number of adult learners in NY needing additional education to access higher-wage jobs (0.4).

Since the self-study design was submitted, SUNY introduced its Reconnect program, aimed at providing in-demand skills in high-needs fields to adult students (age 25-55) without college degrees. The Reconnect program provides free tuition, fees, books, and supplies for eligible students in 13 of TC3's current programs. Reconnect-eligible programs span fields such as Healthcare and Counseling, Technology and Engineering, Environment and Agriculture, and Education (0.5). This program, along with the predicted demographics shifts in the service area, are already increasing the number of adult students at the College.

TC3 has made significant progress addressing enrollment and retention issues. Enrollment has stabilized and retention has risen by ~10% since 2022. This is in part due to college-wide efforts at becoming more mission-driven, improving documentation and communication, reimagining curriculum and programs to meet students' needs at a time of great demographic change, providing students with new types of support services, completely reinventing our academic assessment processes, making strides in our department-level planning and non-academic assessment, and reorganizing our shared governance structures. TC3 is amid an important cultural shift, guided by its mission and recently adopted Strategic Plan, Strategic Enrollment Plan, and Academic Primary Plan.

PLANNING FOR A VIBRANT FUTURE

The College has long been focused on increasing first-year success rates and retention. Our efforts have included the adoption of nationally recognized best practices, such as our corequisite model for gateway English and math courses and the launch of an early alert system to help us provide targeted support for students. Similarly, our Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) and Advancing Success in Associate Pathways (ASAP) program provide financial support and wrap-around support services for at-risk students. To better understand and develop strategies that drive student success, in July 2025, the College applied and was accepted to Achieving the Dream (ATD), sending teams of staff and faculty to participate in professional development designed to address gaps and build upon strategies using a collaborative data-driven approach. In Fall 2025, TC3 employees completed ATD's Institutional Capacity and Assessment Tool (ICAT) to measure our capacity across seven key areas: leadership, data, equity, teaching, engagement, strategy, and policies; we then used that information to identify strengths, gaps in perception, and actionable steps to boost student success. In 2025, the SUNY launched the Academic Momentum Campaign (SUNY AcMo), an evidence-based initiative to increase retention and completion by providing a framework for looking at first-year success. After collecting baseline data on various success metrics in the summer and fall of 2025, and reviewing SUNY's targets, the Institutional Effectiveness Council finalized a set of proximate goals and completed the SUNY AcMo plan, which was submitted in January 2026 (0.6).

Through its participation in both ATD and SUNY AcMo, the College is reexamining its access and early momentum metrics, such as disaggregated gateway math and English course completion and Fall-to-Fall retention. These initiatives also encourage the College to look for ways to improve access indicators such as adult enrollment and % Pell Recipient to align our student demographics with demographics of our service area. In addition, the College is taking a closer look at milestone metrics such as first-year success (e.g., 30+ credits), and completion metrics (100% and 150% graduation rates). These initiatives come with ambitious and measurable KPIs and are impacting what we do at all levels of the College from gateway support course redesign to program review (0.7).

These College-wide efforts at addressing early momentum, milestone, and mobility metrics are nested within our recently adopted and integrated plans. What follows is a brief description of our Strategic Plan, Strategic Enrollment Plan, and Academic Primary Plan along with some recent successes and current initiatives which are already helping us address some of the specific challenges described above and moving us toward a more data-driven and transparent institution and, more broadly, helping us meet our Mission.

Strategic Plan for 2025-2028

The Strategic Plan Steering Committee, consisting of members from throughout the College, used data collected through the reaffirmation of our Mission to create its initial strategic directions, goals, and key performance indicators. These data included peer benchmarking using IPEDS data, student and employee surveys, focus groups with local stakeholders. The new Board of Trustees approved Strategic Plan serves as our overarching road map to addressing some of our most pressing challenges and meeting our Mission (0.2) (p.4).

Strategic Direction I: Accountability and Transparency

TC3 demonstrates its integrity by being accountable to internal and external constituencies through transparent governance and sharing of data, including institutional effectiveness and learner outcomes.

Since our last self-study, the College has invested significant human and technical resources to support data-informed planning, including data analytics and departmental planning software, as well as the formation of Strategic Enrollment Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Councils through shared governance. Each Council is led by a Vice President to identify measurable goals, track progress, and report on results. These efforts have been successful in increasing enrollment and retention as discussed above, deepening the connection between planning and budgeting processes, and expanding both accountability and transparency.

Strategic Direction II: Innovation and Excellence

TC3 invests in the infrastructure that supports academic excellence, including professional development and scholarship, technology, and the physical resources that enhance teaching, learning, and student success.

The College has made significant upgrades to STEM labs, providing state-of-the-art lab space for chemistry, nanotechnology, and electrical engineering courses. We've also rededicated funding for professional development and provided release time for faculty to develop curriculum and initiatives. A new Facilities Master Plan, completed in 2026, allows us to take a more strategic and coordinated approach to building excellent infrastructure, while leveraging funds from diverse sources in a fiscally challenging environment.

Strategic Direction III: Transfer and Career

TC3 enhances its connection to the greater community by aligning its programs to ensure the social and economic mobility of our learners through relevant programs and transfer pathways.

Based on the last self-study, the College redesigned academic program reviews to include an analysis of each program's strength and stability, making the process more data-driven with labor market and student outcome considerations. This year, we have focused on adding program cost and strengthening "closing the loop" mechanisms within shared governance to allow meaningful changes to occur. The College has also taken steps to clarify and support transfer and career success through articulation agreements, curricular alignment with area needs, pathway information on the TC3 website, and applied learning opportunities.

Strategic Direction IV: Identity and Belonging

TC3 builds a culture of inclusion and belonging by creating a strong identity for the college community of learners, faculty, and staff, as well as a strong identity for the college within the communities we serve.

Since our last self-study, the College has undertaken several initiatives to support the new student transition to college, including strengthened onboarding and communications, streamlined entering student advisement and registration, and expanded online and in-person orientation activities. The College also expanded support for both full-time and part-time faculty through an Adjunct Faculty Convocation, as well as increased staff and funding for our College Teaching Center, which organizes professional development and mentorships. Both Human Resources and Institutional Effectiveness are placing a strategic emphasis on outreach efforts to enhance employee engagement and development.

Strategic Enrollment Plan

Collectively, the demographic shifts described above indicate that the College needs to take a methodical approach to strategic enrollment and retention planning to prioritize limited resources and ensure a stable future for the College. To address these trends, the College launched its most recent Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) (0.4) in 2024, setting measurable goals and strategies for targeted recruitment based on demographic projections in our sponsoring counties and surrounding area:

- Improve the high school capture rate of recent graduates from sponsor county high schools from 15% (Fall 2023) to 25% (Fall 2029).
- Increase the number of new students from outside the sponsor countries from 216 (Fall 2023) to 300 (Fall 2029).
- Increase the number of adult learners 25 years and older from 625 (Fall 2023) to 725 (Fall 2029).
- Increase overall retention rate by 2% each year from 49% for the Fall 2023 cohort to 59% for the Fall 2028 cohort with a focus on improving retention by 1% each year for Pell recipients, underrepresented students, and students from outside sponsor and adjacent counties.
- To achieve these goals, the SEP Council is taking a holistic, data-informed approach including targeted marketing, alignment of academic programs with labor market and community needs, targeted recruitment of CollegeNow students, and the redesign of onboarding processes.

Academic Primary Plan

The heart of TC3 is its academic programs, so it is paramount that programs are relevant to the needs of current and future students, lead to meaningful work or transfer to baccalaureate programs, and engage students in the betterment of their communities—key aspects of the Mission. The most current Academic Primary Plan (0.8) is focused on four primary areas, which include measurable goals:

- Academic Portfolio Review: TC3 is engaging in a 3-year review of its academic offerings, looking at which programs can be started to foster meaningful enrollment growth, which programs can be reimagined and invested in or condensed into concentrations under other programs, and which programs need to be deactivated or discontinued.
- Retention: Although our Fall-to-Fall retention rates have increased approximately 10%, we still lag our peer institutions. The College is taking a data-informed approach to analyzing the reasons and implementing appropriate action steps. In addition, the College is reviewing its academic advising model to ensure it meets the needs of our students.
- Academic Affairs Leadership Structure: Beginning in Spring 2025, discussions were held regarding the sustainability of the current Academic Community Coordinator and Department Chair structure. As a result of these discussions, we reconfigured our Academic Communities and hired three deans to provide oversight to faculty and support the program review process.
- Culture: To ensure that TC3 continues to be a meaningful place to work, learn, grow, and innovate, Academic Affairs is working with the Faculty Association to develop clearer tenure and promotion criteria. In addition, the faculty are in the process of establishing a new Faculty Senate to strengthen the College's shared governance structure.

We know these interconnected efforts will be transformative for students, faculty, staff, and our community. This Self-Study provides an opportunity to identify recent successes and remaining gaps to keep our positive momentum going.

APPROACH TO THE SELF-STUDY

The Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) and Self-Study Leads selected Working Group Co-Chairs for a Steering Committee to direct the Self-Study, communicate findings with the campus community, and prepare the report. The Co-Chairs and Working Group members, who represent different perspectives and roles at the College, have expertise directly relevant to the assigned standard. Each Working Group is affiliated with at least one shared governance entity at the College that the group consulted while drafting their chapters. Working Group membership is identified in Appendix 1. In addition to consulting with shared governance entities, Self-Study communication occurred through a dedicated page on the College website, welcome week activities, and staff development days.

Institutional Priorities

To ensure that the self-study would propel the institution forward, TC3 identified four institutional priorities that advance the Mission and align with the current Strategic Plan and MSCHE standards. The below institutional priorities are aligned with the College's Mission, Strategic Plan, and MSCHE Standards (0.9) and were reviewed and affirmed by the College's Executive Council, President's Cabinet, Shared Governance (College Senate, Board of Trustees, Student Government Association), and the Self-Study Working Group

Chairs (Steering Committee). Each working group created a crosswalk table with examples of how their findings for the standard address these priorities.

- Cultivate excellence in teaching, learning, and academic programs.
- Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility.
- Create a caring, equitable, and engaged campus community for students, faculty, staff and community members.
- Enhance institutional effectiveness, accountability, and transparency for responsible stewardship of resources.

Then, to guide the Working Groups in their analysis and reflection of evidence, all considered the following Lines of Inquiry, which highlight the College's focus on using assessment, including both internal data and peer benchmarking, to guide change that strengthens student outcomes.

- How effectively does the College meet the criteria outlined in this standard using an evidence-based and data-informed approach for analysis?
- How successfully is TC3 meeting institutional priorities relevant to this standard?
- Using peer benchmarking and AIU indicators, what areas of strength and opportunity for TC3 are revealed in meeting the expectations of this standard?
- Is the College demonstrating a culture of continuous improvement and shared governance in meeting the expectations of this standard?

STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS

Table 1. Standard 1 alignment with institutional priorities and strategic directions	
Category	Alignment
Primary Institutional Priorities Addressed	• Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility • Create a caring, equitable, and engaged campus community • Enhance institutional effectiveness, accountability, and transparency for responsible stewardship of resources
Strategic Directions Aligned	• Accountability & Transparency
Focus of the Standard	Mission clarity, goal alignment, student achievement expectations, and use of mission to guide planning, assessment, and decision-making

INTRODUCTION

The College has demonstrated assessment and improvement related to its mission and goals since the last MSCHE Self-Study, including two strategic planning cycles that resulted in two rounds of revisions to the College's Mission, Vision and Values (MVV) statements (1.1)(1.2) and new Strategic Plans (1.3); (1.4). While the COVID-19 pandemic and major leadership transitions impacted the College's ability to effectively implement aspects of the first Strategic Plan (1.3), the College made significant improvements, including implementation of key Guided Pathways principles.

In the most recent strategic planning cycles in 2024, the College began by reviewing its MVV, which served as the foundation for developing a new strategic plan in an increasingly dynamic higher education landscape (1.5). This comprehensive process was highly inclusive and informed by extensive internal and external stakeholder feedback, including a series of World Café discussions and surveys with employees and students, and led by diverse, cross-campus committees. This intentional approach created alignment between the MVV and Strategic Plan, while establishing a foundation of data literacy on which to ask questions and build conversations. The College's revised Mission—to "foster lifelong curiosity and inquiry through innovative educational pathways, leading students to meaningful work, economic growth, and a brighter future"—reflects the College's values, focus on improving student outcomes through a robust educational experience, and drives decision-making and strategic planning across divisions and at all levels of the College.

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

Criterion 1. Clearly defined mission and goals.

The College developed its current MVV during the 2023-24 academic year through a collaborative, evidence-driven process administered by employees from across campus who are alumni of PEAKS, a regional community college leadership program. These employees gathered data from analysis of more than 1,000 comments from the College community (1.6), and a smaller PEAKS working group used this data to draft the new MVV, which they presented to fellow PEAKS alumni, the College Senate, the Executive Council, the

Board of Trustees, the Student Government Association and the campus community via open forums and an all-campus professional day (1.7). The working group used comments and feedback from these presentations to revise and refine the MVV. The final version was presented and approved by the Board of Trustees (1.8). The new MVV, together with the information that shaped it, guided the development of key institutional plans such as the new Strategic Plan (1.9), the Strategic Enrollment Plan (1.10), and the Academic Primary Plan (1.11) and the establishment of a planning structure whereby the MVV and the Strategic Plan are foundational to all of the College's planning, goals, and work.

The Strategic Plan Steering Committee (SPSC) (1.12) used data collected through the MVV development process to create its initial strategic directions, goals, objectives, and key performance indicators for its development of the new Strategic Plan. This data included the MSCHE AIU and IPEDS Comparative Reports, Student and Employee SUNY Campus Climate Surveys (which include benchmarking against other SUNY institutions), TC3 student satisfaction surveys and focus groups, and surveys of and focus groups with local stakeholders. As an example of the SPSC using this data in its work, external stakeholder feedback revealed positive responses about TC3 activities as well as a desire for increased external communication about them. The SPSC drew on these findings in the development of Strategic Plan Goal 1.4, calling for the "Creat[ion of] a structural framework for organizational community relations by the beginning of Fall 2028." (1.13). Using data in such a manner and with the support of the Executive Council, the SPSC shepherded the new Strategic Plan through the shared governance process (1.14);(1.15).

Divisional plans are also based on data and input from stakeholders across campus. The SEP Council, with membership from each academic community and departments across the College, developed the Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) based on Power BI dashboards with recruitment, enrollment, retention, and other data, peer SUNY community college data for benchmarking, and demographic data for the community. The Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs leveraged his role on the diverse SPSC, to inform the Academic Primary Plan (APP), ensuring that the APP goals clearly aligned with Strategic Plan goals and the underlying datasets. The APP was also presented to faculty in an all faculty forum, to College Senate, and to Provost's Council (1.15);(1.16);(1.17).

Beyond the development of institution-level plans, the College has intentionally used the MVV and Strategic Plan in division- and department-level planning (Table 2). For example, while annual budget requests have long-required managers to tie their division or department annual goals and initiatives to strategic and diversity plans (1.18), the budget process was redesigned by the Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC) to support intentional mapping to, and continuous assessment of, Mission-aligned institutional goals using new planning software. Additionally, divisions and departments must now submit plans and budget requests earlier in the year to allow for Vice Presidents to assess their alignment with and integration into the overall budget (1.19);(1.20);(1.21). Further, the College has strengthened its approach to defining student success outcomes with the development of specific Key Performance Indicators (KPI) tied to the MVV in the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan. The President's creation of a new Institutional Effectiveness division in Spring 2025, with its affiliated IEC, strengthened intentional and coordinated planning, goal-related decision-making, and timely communication to guide stewardship of resources in line with the Strategic Plan (1.22);(1.23). The College's recent SUNY Academic Momentum plan also illustrates that the links between the strategic directions and the College's goals for improved student outcome plan are well aligned (1.24).

Table 2. MVV and Strategic Plan Alignment with institutional planning.			
Area	Examples of Actions Taken	Alignment	Evidence
Unit Plans	Planning software (Watermark) includes Mission and Strategic Planning information for unit plan development	All unit level goals map up to an institutional plan, so constituents connect their work to the MVV & Strategic Goals	(1.18) (1.19)
Resource Allocation	Revised budget process	Each department and division maps budget requests to outcomes tied to the Strategic Plan	Presentation on budget process & planning (1.19) (1.20)
Program & Curriculum Development	Created a Health Sciences AS degree to articulate with Upstate Medical	This is a high-demand career field that helps ensure economic mobility	(1.67)
Definition of Outcomes	Retention trailed peers, prompting the SEP to set a clear goal and the SP to define specific targets, with shared governance oversight	Connect retention/completion to brighter future & economic mobility	(1.10) (1.68)

The College invests in scholarly inquiry and creative activities for staff and students. For example, the College publishes Ke’lab, a literary and arts magazine for all members of the College community and has hosted showcases where faculty and students from various programs performed, presented posters, and demonstrated their work to the campus community, such as the annual New Media A.S. program student presentations (1.25);(1.26). The College invests in faculty professional development through the College Teaching Center (CTC), which supports scholarly inquiry through roundtables for faculty and opportunities for mentorship pairings (1.27) and which co-hosts a regional community college teaching conference (1.28). Moreover, a clause in the faculty contract allows full-time faculty to bank overload time and use it to take a semester off from teaching, advising, and service (p. 11-12) (1.29). Several have used this provision to focus on scholarly and creative activities, including publications (1.30);(1.31);(1.32).

The College actively keeps the campus community informed about ongoing initiatives and programs related to the MVV and the Strategic Plan in a variety of ways, including through regular emails from the President to the campus community, dedicated College webpages, and the reports to the Board of Trustees, the College and annual reports from the President (1.33);(1.34). The diverse membership of the IEC, with representation from each division, helps ensure communication of transparency about the outcomes of strategic planning to the College community, while each Vice President provides regular communications regarding division activities and progress towards the strategic plans within their purview. Additionally, the College is committed to keeping external audiences, including alumni, informed about key events, opportunities, changes, and outcomes, strengthening trust and reinforcing the value of their continued engagement with the College (1.35). Objective 1.4.4 of the Strategic Plan establishes communication with stakeholders as a priority and calls for the College to “refine annual institutional responsibilities for community relations and define a regular cadence for check-ins with key community groups by the end of Fall 2025.” Progress on this initiative began with an internal survey by the Marketing department to create an inventory of what community relations work is being done by various departments on campus (1.36);(1.37).

Criterion 2. Institutional goals that are realistic, appropriate to higher education, and consistent with mission

The College has realistic institutional goals that are appropriate and consistent with its Mission as a community college. While the College is just finishing year one of the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan the goals are proving to be realistic as they are already yielding results, such as the development of multiple articulation agreements (Goal 3). Another example of realistic goal setting is the 2024 SEP goal to increase adult student enrollment to 725; this goal was met in Fall 2025, when 775 adult learners enrolled (1.38). To ensure that institutional goals continue to be appropriate to higher education, the Board of Trustees developed Strategic Planning Guiding Principles that align with the MCSHE values overall (1.39). To demonstrate consistency with the mission, a crosswalk between the language of the four strategic directions and the new MVV was developed and presented to the SPSC on January 25, 2025 (Table 3) (1.40).

Table 3. Strategic Plan Crosswalk to Mission to foster lifelong curiosity and inquiry through innovative educational pathways, leading students to meaningful work, economic growth, and a brighter future.			
Strategic Direction	Curiosity and Inquiry	Innovative Educational Pathways	Meaningful Work, Economic Growth, Brighter Future
Accountability & Transparency			X
Innovation & Excellence	X	X	
Transfer & Career		X	X
Identity & Belonging	X		X

Criterion 3. Goals that focus on student learning outcomes and student achievement (including retention, graduation, transfer, and placement rates); consider diversity, equity, and inclusion principles; are supported by administrative, educational, and student support programs and services; and prioritize institutional improvement.

The College is committed to continuous improvement by advancing student outcome goals that are grounded in equity and supported across all areas of the institution. Since the previous Self-Study, the College has made meaningful progress in the development of measurable objectives and the use of data-informed decision-making. By incorporating intentional benchmarking against peer institutions and more disaggregated data, the College is strengthening its ability to assess impact, promote accountability, and ensure that its goals are both ambitious and achievable.

Since the last Self-Study, the College has strengthened its use of data infrastructure, analysis, and data-informed decision-making in many areas, including student achievement outcomes. Examining benchmarking and disaggregated data related to student outcomes has allowed the College to respond with intentional improvement efforts that have led to significant improvements in key metrics such as fall-to-fall retention (1.41) (pg.21). Another improvement in using data in planning is the use of specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals, whereas in the past, strategic and academic plans emphasized broad qualitative assessments. For instance, the College’s inaugural (2019) Academic Primary Plan (APP), which was structured around guided pathways principles, lacked clear metrics for such qualitative evaluation summaries as, “some positive work was performed but not enough” or “limited or no work was accomplished” (1.42). The current APP, however, incorporates SMART goals, such as “Build 3

signature articulation agreements for each transfer degree program by Aug 2026” (1.43). Clearly stated objectives help to focus efforts, and the College has already seen progress with several programs finalizing new and revised articulation agreements (1.44). One example of the College setting SMART goals to help raise student achievement is within the Strategic Enrollment Plan, which sets specific retention goals to increase overall retention from 49% to 59% over a five-year period. Increasing retention is essential to growing completion at TC3, which in turn fosters economic mobility (1.45).

Investments in data analysis and visualization tools (PowerBI), student engagement tools (Slate and Campus Groups) and planning software (Watermark), as well as expanded Institutional Effectiveness staffing, support the College’s ability to disaggregate and analyze data and to utilize benchmarking in effective planning and goal setting. For example, IPEDS shows that the College outperforms peer institutions with regard to transfer rate at 34.2% compared to 32.3%. However, a more nuanced analysis reveals important patterns, such as a disproportionately high rate of transfers to other community colleges, with 28% of TC3 students transferring to other 2-year colleges, while our benchmarking institutions had only 20% per post-secondary data partnership (PDP) data from 2021 cohort six-year outcomes (1.46). Uncovering these trends provides critical insight, enabling the College to identify areas for targeted action, clarify student pathways, and drive meaningful, data-informed improvement (1.46). Goal 3.3 of the College’s strategic plan is informed by these data and is focused on improving these outcomes through improving applied learning experiences and signature articulation agreements for students.

The College has made significant progress in using benchmarking to develop measurable goals. For example, the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan Direction 1, Accountability and Transparency, outlines that the College will identify specific benchmarking goals by comparing to aspirational community colleges and establish annual goals for credit momentum, retention, completion (graduation rates), transfer, and employment. Further, the College used SUNY Academic Momentum benchmarks (that were based on state and national data) to develop a plan with specific, measurable goals for gateway course pass rates, retention, and graduation rates (1.47). Both the SEP Council and the SPSC reviewed data sets and completed trend analyses related to student success in mapping out their future goals (1.46);(1.48).

The College performs well in several other areas regarding performance metrics related to standardized examinations and post-graduation outcomes. For example, the College has consistently performed well on NCLEX exams (1.49);(1.50) and is committed to maintaining the quality of its nursing program through ACEN accreditation. In addition, the College is above the midpoint for two-year colleges with regards to median earnings of financial aid recipients (1.51). Consistent with its Mission of "leading students to meaningful work, economic growth, and a brighter future," the College is committed to raising median earnings through intentional, equity-driven strategies that ensure that all students thrive. For example, the IEC has defined metrics related to post-graduation earnings using Post-Secondary Educational Outcomes (PSEO data). Further, the 2025-2028 APP includes academic program review goals focused on providing applied learning experiences within each AAS program and articulation agreements within AA/AS programs, thus strengthening career and transfer outcomes, which in turn, support increased earnings.

The College has set goals related to meaningful growth in retention, transfer, and job placement—three priorities explicitly identified in the 2025–2028 Strategic Plan. Retention and transfer are also central goals in the 2025–2028 APP. These goals emerged from data analyses conducted throughout the planning processes for each area and reflect coordinated institutional planning based on the Strategic Plan. For instance, when creating the SEP, the College analyzed retention data, finding that in Fall 2022 the total FTFT

retention rates were 39.6% as compared to 48.8% in Fall 2023, representing an increase of nearly 10%, with larger gains among students of color. However, analysis of retention rates reveals that the College lags 10–15% behind our peer institutions (1.45). This gap has prompted the College to prioritize retention as a key area for improvement.

As part of this effort, the College applied and was accepted to the Achieving the Dream (ATD) cohort (1.52) and is working closely with a data coach to strengthen its capacity for collecting, analyzing, and applying data to drive meaningful changes. The College has used all-campus meetings to communicate the connection between initiatives and goals (1.53) and to review the results of Institutional Capacity surveys administered in Fall 2025 (1.54). The ATD Plan provides additional measures, with a focus on early momentum metrics like completion of 15 credits in the first semester, to support effective goal setting and assessment. The College invested in an alumni outcomes report from Lightcast (1.55) and a post-graduate survey of TC3 alumni, both of which were used by the SPSC in developing goals and objectives (1.46).

In the academic area, department chairs have been trained by Institutional Research in the use of data tools to support Academic Program Reviews (APR), and programmatic data on student completion and retention are key parts of the APR process (1.56) and have driven key goals in the 2025-2028 APP related to improving student outcomes. Moreover, the formation of the IEC and the sharing of PowerBI access with all campus employees reinforce accountability and transparency in alignment with the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan.

Two of the College’s Values are equity and inclusion, and the 2025–2028 Strategic Plan reflects the College’s commitment to these Values and their relationship to diversity by dedicating an entire Strategic Direction to “Identity and Belonging.” This direction is closely aligned with the College’s Equity, Diversity, Justice, and Inclusion (EDJI) Plan, reinforcing a charge to annually review EDJI metrics and meet defined goals by Spring 2027 (1.57). The newly developed SEP further advances this work by setting specific goals for supporting students of color, male students, and socio-economically disadvantaged students (1.45).

Disaggregated data for the campus community shows that TC3’s student and employee racial diversity reflects the surrounding counties (1.58);(1.59), and employee racial demographics largely match those of our benchmarking institutions (1.60).

The College has long focused on creating a caring, equitable, and engaged campus, investing resources, such as new positions and funding, to support staff and students (Table 4). Student services are further described within Standard IV.

Table 4. Select examples of institutional support of student success		
Area of Support	Specific Examples	Investment of Resources
Administrative	Creation of Institutional Effectiveness Area (2024); Greater Resources to Student Engagement (Enrollment Operations)	Two dedicated staff positions, and creation of Institutional Effectiveness Council to support data-informed planning to improve retention and graduation (1.23)(1.22)(1.69) Two FTE dedicated to Slate CRM implementation from inquiry through completion, including advising and early alert communications (1.70)
	Revised academic structure to match Guided Pathways	FTE and work reassignment (1.71)

	Panther Welcome Center Re-organization (2024)	Creation of Dean for Enrollment Operations & Welcome Center Services position and Bursar office to more effectively deliver student services (1.72)(1.70)
Educational	Tutoring	Perkins funding to support tutoring center (1.73)
	Access & Equity Office	Implementation of social justice model; Creation of sensory space (Access & Equity Website; Sensory Space News Story)
	Advising Expectations	Creation of virtual space for information sharing among faculty and professional advisors (1.74)
	College Teaching Center	Faculty mentorships, workshops, etc. (1.27)
	Teaching Manual	Updated annually to provide information for instructors to ensure consistency of student experiences, including understanding of academic & student resources (1.75)
Student Support	EOP	Launched July 2022 (1.76); restructured to strengthen outreach & wrap-around supports (1.77)
	Support Corridor	Intentional development of support services in shared physical location: Health & Wellness, Best Life/Counseling, Panther Pantry & Clothing Closet, Campus Security, Recovery Center (1.78);(1.79)
	Career preparation	Creation of Assistant Director of Employer Relations and Applied Learning position (1.80), grants to compensate students in unpaid internships (1.81)

The College always strives to operate in a fiscally responsible manner. In the 2024-2025 academic year, the Executive Council focused on right-sizing the institution, which involved identifying investments that did not meet the College’s core goals. For example, the College made the strategic decision to discontinue use of its underutilized extension centers—a move prompted by declining extension center enrollment and the shift toward online instruction. Recognizing that high-quality educational opportunities could be delivered effectively without maintaining certain physical spaces, the Foundation Board of Directors approved the sale of the Cortland Extension Center and transitioned the Ithaca Extension Center to a fully leased facility (1.61). These actions reflect a broader institutional commitment to aligning resources with evolving student needs and instructional modalities, while maximizing operational efficiency.

To understand the College’s expenditures, an analysis of IPEDS data on revenue sources and expense functions between 2019 and 2023 indicates that the College’s percentage of total expenses dedicated to instructional support is comparable to its peer institutions (1.62). While academic support functions are a higher percentage of the total expenses at TC3 compared to peers. The College provides robust wrap-around support services to students as noted (Table 4).

Criterion 4. Periodic assessment of mission and goals to ensure they are relevant and achievable.

Since the prior self-study, the College has shifted toward a more consistent and proactive process of institutional reflection (1.2). As an important part of this process, the President communicates clear goals and objectives for the College at the beginning of each academic year and then reports monthly to the Board of Trustees on progress toward meeting those goals (1.63). For example, the President’s goals for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 outlined objectives to engage the campus community by strengthening College strategic planning processes and to engage the external community by considering and addressing gaps in the

Mission (1.64)(1.65). In pursuit of these objectives, the Dean of Organizational Development implemented a series of World Cafés centered on themes of belonging and retention. These inclusive, community-driven conversations became the foundation for reimagining the College’s MVV. That renewed sense of shared purpose helped shape and guide the dialogue throughout the Strategic Planning process, ensuring that the voices of students, faculty, and staff were reflected in the institution’s future direction. To further ensure that the MVV is reviewed periodically, MVV review will be embedded into the Institutional Planning and Assessment Ecosystem (IPAE) as a step prior to the next strategic plan development. The IPAE is the framework for aligning department planning and budgeting to divisional and strategic planning. The cross-functional IEC oversees implementation of the IPAE to ensure that departments set data-informed SMART goals (1.66).

ALIGNMENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

Table 5. Standard 1 to Institutional Priority Crosswalk			
MSCHE Standard / Criterion	Institutional Priority	Alignment Narrative	Representative Evidence
Standard 1, Criteria 1–4	Accountability & Transparency	The College’s mission and goals provide a clear framework for strategic planning, assessment, and budget development. The adoption of SMART goals and measurable KPIs in the 2025–2028 Strategic Plan reflects increased transparency, accountability, and intentional alignment between institutional priorities and decision-making processes.	Mission, Vision, and Values adoption materials; 2025–2028 Strategic Plan; Institutional Effectiveness KPIs; budget and planning guides
Standard 1, Criteria 1–2	Innovation & Excellence	The mission’s emphasis on fostering lifelong curiosity, inquiry, and meaningful work informs institutional priorities related to instructional quality, academic innovation, and scholarly and creative activity. Strategic planning and academic initiatives are designed to advance student learning outcomes and economic mobility in alignment with mission-driven goals.	Academic Plan materials; program review documentation; Teaching Center resources; scholarly and creative activity initiatives
Standard 1, Criteria 2–3	Identity, Belonging, and Community Engagement	The College’s mission and values emphasize inclusivity, equity, and responsiveness to community needs. Institutional priorities related to identity, belonging, and external engagement are grounded in mission-aligned planning processes, including community input during MVV development and strategic goals focused on strengthening community relations and workforce partnerships.	World Café summaries; community and stakeholder surveys; Strategic Plan Direction on Identity and Belonging; community relations initiatives
Standard 1, Criterion 4	Continuous Improvement & Institutional Effectiveness	The College has implemented more regular, data-informed reflection on mission and goals through leadership, goal-setting, planning cycles, and the development of an institutional planning and assessment ecosystem. These practices support ongoing review of mission relevance and goal achievement.	President’s annual goals; planning ecosystem documentation; Board of Trustees materials; assessment and benchmarking reports

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Standard 1 is examined through the lens of the College's institutional priorities to ensure alignment between Mission, planning, assessment, and institutional decision-making. Evidence presented in this chapter demonstrates that the College's Mission, Vision, and Values serve as the foundational framework for institutional priorities related to Accountability and Transparency, Innovation and Excellence, and Identity, Belonging, and Community Engagement.

The development and adoption of the 2024 MVV and the 2025–2028 Strategic Plan reflect a deliberate shift toward inclusive, data-informed, and mission-driven planning. These processes strengthened institutional coherence by aligning strategic goals, key performance indicators, and resource allocation decisions with the College's core purpose. Ongoing efforts to formalize planning, assessment, and communication processes further reinforce the integration of Standard 1 expectations with institutional priorities and continuous improvement.

Strengths:

- Full engagement of campus and external stakeholder input into the development of its MVV
- Intentionally outcome-focused MVV that are foundational for all subsequent planning documents, ensuring alignment across institutional efforts.
- Deeper use of data to inform decision-making and guide strategic planning.
- Development of SMART goals, establishment of measurable KPIs, and consistent benchmarking against peer institutions to assess progress and support continuous improvement

Area for Improvement:

- The College has done well to educate department leaders, as well as those staff and faculty serving on various councils and committees, about the integrated, data-informed planning and budgeting process, yet this level of deep understanding is not shared across the College.

Recommendation:

- Using ICAT results, strengthen understanding among campus faculty and staff of the connection of the MVV and campus initiatives to our planning and budgeting structure. To support continuous improvement and accountability, data literacy and assessment training should be provided to strengthen institutional capacity to evaluate progress toward institutional goals.

STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Table 1. Standard 2 alignment with institutional priorities and strategic directions.

Category	Alignment
Primary Institutional Priorities Addressed	• Create a caring, equitable, and engaged campus community • Enhance institutional effectiveness, accountability, and transparency for responsible stewardship of resources
Strategic Directions Aligned	• Accountability & Transparency
Focus of the Standard	Ethical conduct, transparency, compliance, academic freedom, grievance processes, and truthful representation to internal and external stakeholders

INTRODUCTION

Since the last MSCHE Self-Study, the College has engaged in extensive campus climate assessment processes, ranging from collaborative World Cafés to SUNY peer-benchmarked climate surveys. The College used these varied data sets to develop its institutional plans, which it has shared widely and integrated into shared governance and budgeting processes to ensure that resource stewardship aligns with strategic priorities such as accountability, transparency, and building a caring, equitable, and engaged campus.

Recent changes in leadership, and therefore priorities, led to transitions in processes and procedures, but the College has worked to ensure compliance, transparency, and accountability to those we serve and has made great strides in better documenting and updating important policies and processes. Highlights of this work include more resources devoted to marketing and communications, systematic review of policies, intentional assessment, and inclusive planning. Since the last MSCHE self-study, the College has focused on strengthening councils and committees as part of improving institutional effectiveness. Some examples include the Academic Assessment Committee (AAC), the Strategic Enrollment Planning Council (SEP), the Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC), and the Diversity Equity Action Council (DEAC).

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

Criterion 1. commitment to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights and copyright.

The College has clear, documented policies regarding academic freedom (2.1), (2.2) (Article 8.1 p.8), (2.3) (Article 8.1 p.10); intellectual freedom (2.4); a commitment to freedom of expression (2.5),(2.6); and respect for intellectual property rights (2.5), (2.7) (Article 30 p.18), (2.2) (Article 18.5 p.49), (2.3) (Article 8.13 p.11); and copyright (2.8), (2.2) (Article 17.2 p.47).

Criterion 2. climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration from a variety of backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives.

The College's support of a wide variety of students and employees demonstrates commitment to diversity in backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives in real and actionable ways. To gauge campus climate and satisfaction, the College conducts regular assessments of various stakeholders (Table 2) and uses the results of those assessments in planning, described in this standard as well as in I and IV.

Table 2. Assessments of campus climate			
Assessment Used	Administered	Utilized by	Example Action Taken
SUNY Student Satisfaction	Annually 2026 (in progress), 2024, 2021, 2019	Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC), President, Executive Council (EC), Diversity Equity Action Council (DEAC)	Steering committee utilized student feedback to define goals within strategic directions (2.18)
Student Campus Climate Survey	At least every 4 years SUNY: (2024, 2020) Internal: 2018	SPSC, DEAC, President, EC	DEAC made recommendations to President and VP of Institutional Effectiveness (2.125)
Employee Campus Climate Survey	At least every 4 years National: Fall 2026 (planned) SUNY: Fall 2024 Internal: Fall 2020	FA'24 Survey used by SP SC, DEAC, President, EC,	Revision of EDJI Plan identifies hiring practices as an opportunity for improvement (2.19)
World Café sessions on Retention	Employees: Oct. 2023 Students: Nov. 2023, Feb. 2024	PEAKS, MVV Working Group, SPSC, SGA, DEAC, BOT, EC	Feedback from the campus community was used to develop key values in rewriting the Mission, Vision, & Values (2.120)

TC3's student population is on par with both peer institutions and the demographics of the two sponsor counties with regards to racial diversity, though the College has a higher percentage of Black individuals in the student population than in the surrounding community (2.9);(2.10). Since employees primarily come from the surrounding area the racial diversity of the College's employees, while similar to its peer institutions in IPEDS (4.12), does not fully reflect the diversity within student populations (2.9); criterion 5 describes the College's approach to hiring with attention to racial diversity. The 2024 Employee Campus Climate Survey (2.11) indicates that on measures other than race, including percentages of LGBTQIA+ (p.48) and disabled (p.22) employees, TC3 is more diverse than benchmarking institutions.

In 2024, the College shifted from internal campus climate surveys, such as PULSE student survey (2.12) and the CDO's survey of employees (2.13) to peer-benchmarked surveys. The 2024 SUNY Student Satisfaction (2.14) and the Campus Climate Surveys for employees (2.11) and students (2.15) indicate that the College fosters a climate of respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration from a variety of backgrounds and ideas, including veterans, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, people of color, religious practitioners, and members of varied political parties. Overall, the results of the 2024 Campus Climate Surveys for employees (p.69-79)(2.11) and students (p.71-80, 117, 119, 122) (2.15) indicate that the College cultivates an inclusive, welcoming environment, on par with benchmarking institutions. Subpopulations of employee groups also self-report being treated with respect at the College (veterans p.17-19);(employees with disabilities p.30-32), with some employee groups even reporting feeling more welcome on campus than in the surrounding community (LGBTQIA+ p.52);(employees of color p.61);(2.11).

In addition, according to the 2024 SUNY Student Satisfaction Survey (2.14), the College performs better than its benchmarking institutions when it comes to students feeling respected by faculty and staff (p.3). Furthermore, among student subpopulations, 86% of veterans (p.13), 75% of students with disabilities (p.23), and 73% students of color (p.57) report feeling welcome on campus, while LGBTQIA+ students say they can openly express their gender identity/expression (75%) and sexual identity/orientation (74%) on campus (p.46 and 49). Interestingly, 67% of students with disabilities reported being satisfied with overall services (p.20), indicating room for improvement; the College will review whether this metric has improved since the full implementation of the social justice model for determining access services. This model uses self-reporting as a source of information for accommodation services as opposed to formal documentation and testing.

While participation was robust in the 2024 Employee Campus Climate Survey, conclusions drawn from percentages must be approached with a degree of caution, both because sub-divisions of respondents represent very small sample sizes, and because the College lacks necessary contextual information from SUNY to ensure that comparisons between our respondents and the identified benchmarking institutions are statistically valid. To address this, the office of Organizational Development is administering a nationally benchmarked climate survey in Fall 2026.

TC3 uses assessments to drive strategic priorities in many ways. For example, data from the 2024 strategic plan survey (2.17) supports the need for a strategic focus on employee engagement and transparency in decision-making. As a result, the College created a strategic pillar focused on strengthening employee engagement (Goal 4.3 of the Strategic Plan) (2.18); revised the Equity, Diversity, Justice, and Inclusion (EDJI) plan to include an emphasis on professional development (2.19); developed a new webpage with shared governance information and resources to help strengthen shared governance on campus (2.20); and formed an Institutional Effectiveness Council to strengthen non-academic assessment practices (2.21). The 2024 SUNY Student Satisfaction Survey results suggested a dissatisfaction with the physical environment in residential facilities; consequently, significant resources were invested into improving the residential infrastructure in the Summer 2025. The SUNY Student Satisfaction Survey is being administered in Spring 2026, and the College is optimistic that there will be an increase in student satisfaction with residential facilities.

Criterion 3. A grievance policy that is documented and disseminated to address complaints or grievances raised by students, faculty or staff. The institution's policies are fair and impartial and assure that grievances are addressed promptly, appropriately, and equitably.

The College has clearly stated grievance policies and methods for campus community members to report incidents and complaints. Since the last Self-Study, the College has implemented several changes to assure the equitability of the grievance and complaint system, including the use of Maxient for process documentation (2.22), broad communication about student rights and responsibilities and the complaint process, and the separation of the judicial process from the purview of Residence Life. The shift to a digital system ensures that the College can track and respond to concerns more effectively. The separation of the judicial process addresses a recommendation from the prior MSCHE self-study.

The process for complaints is straightforward. Anyone can access the Consumer Information page on the College website to report concerns with accrediting bodies (2.23), and all students and employees can report incidents through a link on the Campus Police webpage (2.24), including incidents regarding discrimination, interpersonal violence, and non-academic or conduct violations. Further, students receive this link via email and through the College Students Rights and Responsibilities webpage (<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/student-rights-responsibilities/student-rights-responsibilities>) (2.25). The Associate Vice President (AVP) for Student Affairs reviews submitted reports and directs them to the appropriate administrative hearing officer who addresses the incident. To ensure timely responses to student complaints, the AVP set deadlines for each stage of the resolution process, and reviews resolution progress in Maxient (2.26). Students and employees may submit Title IX complaints directly through Maxient, or contact a Title IX Officer who then documents the complaint in Maxient (2.27);(2.28).

The 2024 Student Campus Climate Survey (2.16) shows that the College's efforts to build an equitable system for addressing discrimination and harassment are successful, at levels better students report at peer institutions. In the survey, TC3 students indicate that they are aware of, confident in, and feel safe engaging the complaint process (p.88-90); further, among the 24% who reported an incident within the past two years, 46% feel their complaint was taken seriously (p.93-95). The College has not yet conducted analyses to assess whether responses to complaints or grievances are equitable across categories of age, race ethnicity etc. relative to benchmarking institutions as data is currently unavailable from SUNY; this represents an opportunity for the College to deepen its understanding of equity in this arena.

Contract violations and grievances by employees are tracked (2.29) and there is a documented process for reporting within each union contract (2.2) (Article XVI pp.42-45); (2.3) (Article XVI pp.23-27); (2.7) (Article 40). Policies and forms for reporting, investigating, and resolving incidents of discrimination or harassment are posted to the Human Resources (HR) website (2.30). During the current self-study, HR developed a clearer process for reporting complaints that are not related to contractual or legal violations (2.31);(2.32).

Criterion 4. avoidance of conflict of interest or the appearance of such conflict in all activities and among all constituents;

The College has documented policies on conflicts of interest for the Board of Trustees (2.33). In addition, the Nepotism Policy (2.34) states that TC3 is “committed to upholding the highest standard of ethical conduct with respect to the organization’s hiring and business practices. This policy must be considered when hiring, promoting, transferring any employee as well as any business transactions that may directly be influenced by familial or household relationships.” Further, the policy explicitly states the College’s desire to “avoid creating or maintaining circumstances in which the appearance of favoritism or possibility of favoritism and/or conflicts of interest exist.” In practice, the policy requires disclosure to HR should hiring or promotion decisions involve close relatives; if the conflict involves a business transaction, the employee must also notify the Vice President of Finance. While the College has policies and at least one evident recusal (2.35), more systematic tracking of disclosed conflicts may be in order.

Criterion 5. fair and impartial employment practices, including all phases of hiring, evaluation, promotion, and separation, with appropriate attention to diversity;

The College has policies and processes in place for all phases of hiring, evaluation, promotion, and separation. Collective bargaining agreements outline fair and impartial practices regarding hiring (2.36); (2.37), evaluation (2.38);(2.39);(2.40), promotion (2.41);(2.42);(2.2), and separation for each of the unions on campus. There are a few areas of opportunity for increasing clarity and efficacy regarding these policies and processes, including refining promotion requirements for full-time faculty (see Standard III), communication about the College's hiring processes, and analysis of disaggregated data regarding the outcomes of these policies and processes. During this self-study review, this opportunity for improvement was recognized (Presidential memo to human resources issues April 2026).

The hiring process has been documented by HR (2.37) and shared with administration and union leadership. The College community can access a standardized Request to Fill form on the HR website to initiate the process of hiring. The form makes clear which administrators are involved in approving new positions before it goes to the President and BOT (2.46). HR maintains a list of "Diversity Recruitment Resources" to aid search committees in recruitment with attention to diverse hiring (2.47). The College advertises open positions on the HR website and via The Chronicle of Higher Education – ChronicleCareer.com, Hispanic Outlook, Diverse Issues in Higher Education, InsideHigherEd.com, Insight into Diversity, CareerBuilder.com, HigherEdJobs.com, and Indeed.com (2.48), and search committee chairs may elect to advertise through additional avenues as well. Search committees must develop their decision-making rubric and interview questions, including a question addressing a candidate's approach to working with diverse populations, before gaining access to the candidate pool. The hiring process also includes a Candidate Pool Reflection and Affirmative Action Summary Report, which require explanation for decisions made regarding candidates and tracking of any candidate disclosures (Candidate Pool Reflection) (Affirmative Action Summary). These steps help to build a diverse pool and limit the possibility that search committees may introduce bias into questions and decision-making as they review candidates. The updated EDJI plan acknowledges opportunities to strengthen diverse hiring practices, as evidenced by Goal 2, Action Step C (2.19), perhaps with support from the SUNY Affirmative Action Officer.

The Provost's Office has jurisdiction over promotion recommendations to the President for full-time faculty (2.2). Beyond conditions for automatic promotion from Instructor to Assistant Professor, the Faculty Association contract does not specify the criteria used to recommend promotion. Full-time faculty are currently engaged in the formation of a Faculty Senate, which would include the creation of a Tenure and Promotion Committee to provide shared governance input into the promotion process.

To assess equity in employment practices, HR invested in an Applicant Tracking System in Human Resources Information Management System (Paycor), which allows for review of overarching hiring patterns (2.49). The College has not yet conducted such an analysis as this is a recent implementation. HR will be able to examine disaggregated data for hiring, evaluation, promotion, and separation and to share summaries of the results with appropriate shared governance and employee groups.

Criterion 6. honesty and truthfulness in public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting and admissions materials and practices, as well as internal communications;

The College is honest and truthful in its communications with internal and external members of our larger community. It expresses commitment to transparency and honesty in its communications with potential students and their families through accurate characterization (2.50) of the small student to faculty ratio (IPEDS), the percentage of financial aid disbursement (IPEDS), and its no-cost application (2.51), and open admissions policy (2.52). Accepted students receive accurate information from the College through emails, text messages, and the website (2.53);(2.54);(2.55);(2.56);(2.57). One example of honest and truthful communications regarding programs is our Healthcare programs career video (2.58), which refers to multiple course modalities and evening classes, clearly supported by our course offerings (2.59). In addition, the College uses photos and videos shot on the campus for the website and College promotion rather than stock images.

Students have access to the College's Student Rights and Responsibilities (2.25) and receive a syllabus for each of their classes (2.60). Residential students receive a Residence Life Handbook outlining policies and procedures related to living on campus (2.61). In addition, students receive updates via email and text message (2.53);(2.62), use Campus Groups for information about student activities (2.63), and receive vital information on Title IX, Title VI, and other compliance matters during onboarding and throughout the semester (2.24). Enrolled students receive accurate information about key academic deadlines through a publicly available Academic Calendar (2.64). The Student Government Association meets regularly with the President (monthly) to share concerns and updates.

The College has strengthened its marketing and communications by hiring a Director of Strategic Marketing, a webmaster with expertise in digital accessibility, and a digital content specialist (2.65);(2.66);(2.67) who together to ensure a coherent and accurate narrative. In Spring 2025, the College launched a redesigned website that reduced the number of pages, ensuring less duplication and more consistent information (2.68). The development of the marketing and communications team has increased the volume of external communications while maintaining accuracy, which aligns with our Strategic Plan goal to improve awareness about College activities within the larger community (2.69);(2.70);(2.71). To ensure that TC3 communicates accurate and honest information, the College webmaster conducts an annual audit of web content to track its usefulness and accuracy (2.72). The College has also made significant communication investments through the creation of a 3-person Enrollment Management Systems office overseeing campus-wide implementation of Slate, a CRM that allows for seamless tracking and communications about student progress from prospect to completer (slides 30-32) (2.73).

TC3's academic calendars are posted on the website (2.74). Students can access events and student organizations through Campus Groups as well as through the student hub on MyTC3 and via their college email. Faculty and staff generally learn of upcoming activities through their division heads, emails from the Student Affairs offices, and the weekly Academic Affairs Weekly Update. The current Strategic Marketing Plan (2.75) includes the creation of a centralized, comprehensive calendar as a goal (p.15).

The College demonstrates commitment to transparency by requiring shared governance bodies to post their charge or bylaws, membership, agendas, and minutes on the website (2.76) (2.77) (2.78) (2.20), and by including Vice President reports in Board of Trustees agendas (2.78). In addition, the President, Vice

President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, and the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs each provide regular updates via email (2.79) (2.80) (2.81). Each semester, campus-wide meetings orient the community to shared goals, provide introductions to new employees, and communicate other important information related to institutional planning (2.82).

The College is committed to continuous growth in both internal and external communications within its current Strategic Plan, with a direction dedicated to Accountability and Transparency: “TC3 demonstrates its integrity by being accountable to internal and external constituencies through transparent governance and sharing of data, including institutional effectiveness and learner outcomes.” The importance of accountability and transparency became clear through focus groups with adult learners and key external stakeholder groups, affirming the College’s need for increased visibility and accountability (2.83) (2.84). The College has already made great strides in its communication about shared governance, student success, and opportunities for connections between the campus and the communities we serve (p.3-4) (2.18). Thus, the College not only meets its obligations toward honesty and truthfulness in communications but has the structure in place to ensure continuous improvement in this area.

Criterion 7. has policies, services or programs to promote diversity, equity and inclusion; promote affordability and accessibility; enable students to understand funding sources and options, value received for cost, and methods to make informed decisions about incurring debt.

The College is dedicated to supporting all students academically, socially, and economically with policies as well as human, physical, and information resources. For example, the Board of Trustees has a policy on Academically Disadvantaged Students to provide services that promote accessibility and DEI in addition to policies on Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, Against Discrimination and Harassment, on Preferred Names and Pronouns, on Title IX to promote DEI, and several policies regarding tuition to ensure affordability and access (2.36);(2.85);(2.86);(2.87);(2.88);(2.89);(2.90);(2.91).

Resources for students include a food pantry, a clothing closet, an alcohol and drug recovery program, mental health and other wellness services, an Office of Access and Equity, a child care center, a tutoring program, success coaching, LGBTQIA+ resources, a sensory space, student clubs and organizations, and several high-touch support programs such as the Educational Opportunity Program. (See Standard IV for more discussion of student support services.)

Access to financial aid is a seamless part of the application and enrollment process, and the College communicates information related to financial aid to students in a variety of ways, including the website, Slate messaging to accepted students, and during onboarding, as discussed in Standard IV. The Financial Aid website is kept current and accessible (2.92) and provides accurate information about managing college expenses, including cost of attendance; a net price calculator; information about loan repayment and defaults, tuition refunds, withdrawal and Title IX refunds, the percent of students at the College with loans, average student debt, and cohort default rates (2.93);(2.94);(2.95);(2.96);(2.97);(2.98). Financial aid packaging is done quickly, and over 80% of students are granted some form of financial aid (2.92). To help students understand outcomes, each academic program webpage provides information about the purpose of the credential (i.e. for transfer or career), articulation agreements in place for the degree, possible career paths, and the average pay by degree within those careers (2.99).

Criterion 8. compliance with all applicable government laws and regulations and Commission policies and procedures

The College dedicates resources to support full compliance with government laws and regulations and with MSCHE Policies and Procedures, including disclosure on the public-facing website (Table 3). Consistent with federal rules, TC3 maintains an accurate Consumer Information webpage

(<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/policies/consumer-information>), the link to which can be found in the footer of the College website.

Statute	Description	Document	Direct URL
34 CFR § 668.43.a.1	Cost of Attendance	(2.93)	https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/tuition
34 CFR § 668.43.a.2	Refund Policy	(2.96)	https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/tuition/tuition-fee-refunds
34 CFR § 668.43.a.3	Withdrawal procedure		https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/tuition/withdrawal-college
34 CFR § 668.43.a.4	Return of Title IV funds		https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/financial-aid-scholarships/title-iv-refund-policy
34 CFR § 668.43.a.5.i	Degrees and programs		https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/programs
34 CFR § 668.43.a.5.ii	Facilities		https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/map https://tompkinscortland.catalog.prod.coursedog.com/resources/facilities https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/tc3farm
34 CFR § 668.43.a.5.iii	Faculty and instructional personnel	(2.126)	https://tompkinscortland.catalog.prod.coursedog.com/people/faculty
34 CFR § 668.43.a.5.iv	Plans to improve academic functions	(2.18)	https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/strategicplan
34 CFR § 668.43.a.5.v	Professional licensure reciprocity states	(2.127)	https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/student-rights-responsibilities/professional-licensure-disclosures
34 CFR § 668.43.a.5.vi	Prison program	N/A	
34 CFR § 668.43.a.6	Accrediting Body	(2.23)	https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/accreditation
34 CFR § 668.43.a.7	Services/facilities for students with disabilities	(2.128)	https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/access-equity
34 CFR § 668.43.a.8	Info navigator § 668.44	(2.129)	https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/panther-welcome-center
34 CFR § 668.43.a.9	Study abroad	N/A	We do not have any eligible programs of study
34 CFR § 668.43.a.10	Copyright	(2.8)	https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/copyright-compliance-policy
34 CFR § 668.43.a.11.i	Credit transfer criteria	(2.130)	https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/academic-records/academic-regulations

participate in proctored examinations. For example, when the Math Department decided to require in-person, proctored final exams for all math courses, it revised Master Course Syllabi (MCS) course descriptions to inform students that of the requirement (2.107). The MCS for each course is available on the myTC3 website under the “Course Search” function as well as in the College Catalog, which provides general (non-section based) information for each course.

As TC3 prepared to re-launch its newly designed website in January 2025, the UI/UX Web Captain found nearly half of the webpages from the old website to be duplicative, obsolete, or otherwise unhelpful (2.108). The 2025-2028 Strategic Marketing Plan includes an annual content audit to ensure continued compliance for both accuracy and digital accessibility (2.72).

Another route to ensuring the College complies with all applicable government laws and regulations and MSCHE policies and procedures is through its memberships on the SUNY Student Conduct Institute (2.109), the New York State Disability Services Council (2.110), the Association on Higher Education and Disability (2.111), the National Academic Advising Association (2.112) and through retained counsel of Bond, Schoeneck and King, LLC (p.17)(2.113). In addition, SUNY System Administration facilitates a wide range of associations, committees, work groups, task forces, and listservs (2.114) that provide best practices, model language for compliance policies, processes and/or procedures, and resources from other State agencies, other colleges and universities, and/or federal and international agencies.

Criterion 9. periodic assessment of ethics and integrity as evidence in institutional policies, processes, practices, and the manner in which these are implemented.

Since the last Self-Study, the College has demonstrated continuous growth in conducting periodic assessments, in ensuring the oversight of policies, processes, and practices, and in engaging in self-reflection to improve campus culture.

This assessment has resulted in several targeted resources and positions, including the creation of a temporary Chief Policy and Compliance Officer position, the adoption of an Applicant Tracking System, the hiring of a marketing and web development team, and the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan’s key directions of Identity & Belonging and Accountability & Transparency. The unification of Admissions, CollegeNow, Student Success, Student Affairs, Workforce Development, and Marketing under a single division and Vice President has ensured alignment in institutional policies, practices, and processes around the student experience from recruitment through completion (2.115). Further, the creation of an Institutional Effectiveness Division housing the Institutional Research demonstrates a strong commitment to more consistent assessment (2.116). Within the Institutional Effectiveness Division, the College created the Dean of Organizational Development and Chief Diversity Officer position to manage initiatives, policies, and procedures that support ethics and integrity, and reflect the College’s core value of diversity (2.117). The appointment of a full-time faculty member as Co-Chair of the Institutional Effectiveness Council and the inclusion of the Chair of Academic Assessment further ensure that the ethics and integrity of teaching and learning are considered when reviewing college policies, processes, and practices (2.118);(2.119).

Other examples of the College’s practice of assessment include the World Cafes conducted during the 2023-2024 academic year (2.120), the annual administration of SUNY Student Satisfaction Surveys (2.14), and the

timely administration of other surveys (2.15);(2.11);(2.121);(2.84), focus groups (2.83);(2.122);(2.84), and analysis of other measures of performance such as IPEDs and AIU data.

The former Chief Policy and Compliance Officer drafted a “Policy on Policies” that was recently finalized to reflect changes to the College structure (2.123) to ensure a consistent process of review, adoption, and adaptation for all college policies, including assurance that they align with applicable State and Federal policies. All policies and processes are reviewed by relevant Vice Presidents, the Executive Council, the College’s retained legal counsel, the Chief Diversity Officer, and relevant shared governance groups. The College Senate (2.76) and Board of Trustees (2.78) review and approve Board policies, and academic policies are reviewed and voted on by the full faculty prior to advancement to the College Senate. All Board of Trustee policies are posted to a centralized, public-facing website (2.124). The Institutional Effectiveness Administrative Assistant position will help ensure the implementation of policy review cycles.

ALIGNMENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

Consistent with the Self-Study Design, the College’s Ethics and Integrity is examined through the lens of the College’s institutional priorities of a Caring, Equitable, & Engaged Campus, and Responsible Stewardship to ensure coherence among mission, planning, assessment, and resource allocation. Evidence demonstrates how activities, outcomes, and decision-making related to ethics and integrity intentionally advance the College’s institutional priorities and support continuous improvement. This alignment reinforces the integration of accreditation standards with institutional strategy and operational practice.

MSCHE Criterion	Institutional Priority	Alignment Narrative	Representative Evidence
Cr. 1: Freedom	Caring, Equitable, and Engaged Campus	Well-documented policies relating to academic, intellectual, and freedoms of expression ensure an equitable environment on campus.	Faculty Association and Adjunct Association CBAs
Cr. 2: Climate of Respect	Caring, Equitable, & Engaged Campus	A regular pattern of climate assessment and actions taken in response to findings ensure that members of the College community feel respected and part of a caring and equitable campus.	Student Satisfaction Surveys, SUNY Campus Climate Surveys, World Cafe Data
Cr.3: Complaints Process	Caring, Equitable, & Engaged Campus	The College’s adherence to laws related to Title IX and Title IV as well as improved complaint processes and documentation for students ensures a caring and equitable campus.	Student Satisfaction Surveys, Campus Climate Surveys, Maxient Data
Cr.4: Avoidance of Conflict of Interest	Caring, Equitable, & Engaged Campus	The College has clear policies on conflicts of interest, and those policies have been utilized, though better documentation is recommended.	Nepotism Policy; Recusal
Cr.5: Fair Employment Practices	Caring, Equitable, & Engaged Campus	While the College can increase clarity in some areas and examine more disaggregated data about the equity of implementation, it has policies to ensure an equitable campus experience when it comes to hiring, promotion, evaluation, and separation.	Collective Bargaining Agreements

Cr.6: Truthful Communications	Responsible Stewardship of Resources	The College has increased its use of resources to enhance communications with the campus community.	Marketing Plan
Cr.7: Policies that promote DEI, affordability, and clarity of funding	Responsible Stewardship of Resources; Caring, Equitable, & Engaged Campus	The College leverages resources to support all students, from providing extensive financial support and clear information for financial aid decision-making, ensuring an equitable experience for students.	Financial Aid Website
Cr. 8: Compliance	Stewardship of Resources	The College provides the information resources necessary to ensure that students are well-informed on a variety of topics, and the public can access essential information as required by law.	Table 2.3, Consumer Information Page
Cr. 9: Ethics Assessment	Stewardship of Resources; Caring, Equitable, & Engaged Campus	The College is increasingly leveraging resources to ensure that policies are up-to-date and reviewed consistently to ensure that all members of the campus community have an equitable experience.	Policy on Policies

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The College is committed to fostering a caring, equitable, and engaged campus for both students and employees. The College meets the requirements for this standard. Some suggested improvements in analysis and assessment in a few specific areas are noted below. The College has strong policies, processes, and communication plans for supporting student experience. These have been strengthened through dedicated human and financial resources. After years of leadership and structural change, the College is gathering data and reflecting strategies that strengthen processes and communication for employees to support engagement.

Strengths:

- The College has demonstrated significant improvements in policy reviews, documentation, data-informed decision-making, and clearer communications with internal and external audiences.
- Resources dedicated to marketing and increased web development support have helped improve communications and the College's transparency.
- Investments in creating a holistically supportive student environment has resulted in students reporting a strong sense of belonging.

Areas for Improvement and recommendations:

- Assessment of employee engagement and belonging, and comprehensive strategies for employee engagement represent areas of improvement for the College.
- The College has strengthened its human resource policies and the ability to track processes. However, some gaps remain in data analysis of human resources data to assess equity.

Recommendations:

- Utilize internal and nationally benchmarked surveys to assess employee satisfaction and areas for investment.

- Analyze Human Resources data as part of regular assessment cycles, in collaboration with the Diversity Equity Action Council, to ensure diversity in candidate pools and equity in hiring, placement, and promotion decisions.

STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Table 1. Standard 3 alignment with institutional priorities and strategic directions	
Category	Alignment
Primary Institutional Priorities Addressed	• Cultivate excellence in teaching, learning, and academic programs • Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility
Strategic Directions Aligned	• Innovation & Excellence • Transfer & Career
Focus of the Standard	Academic program quality, faculty qualifications, learning resources, instructional modalities, general education, and coherence of the student learning experience

INTRODUCTION

The College has focused on strengthening various aspects of the design of the student experience with broad investments in technology, increased assessment, and improvements to shared governance. Some key examples include: enhanced scheduling and program analysis through data visualization tools and related analysis, strengthened curriculum governance (including revised Curriculum Committee policies and additional oversight by the Assessment Committee), modernization of curriculum workflow through software adoption, significant faculty curricular review, faculty hiring in key areas of growth, improvements in classroom and laboratory spaces in STEM areas, revision of the program review process and reassessment of the College's academic portfolio.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the College has expanded its instructional delivery options, including synchronous online and hyflex modalities, which have been particularly valuable for working students and adult learners. To enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning across modalities, the College also implemented clearer expectations for consistent course design through Master Course Syllabi, section syllabus review practices, and emerging guidance on time-on-task equivalencies for asynchronous learning. These efforts align with the College's current Innovation & Excellence and Transfer & Career strategic directions and are reinforced by broader institutional initiatives that support Guided Pathways and equity-centered student success (including SUNY Academic Momentum and Achieving the Dream work), ensuring that program requirements, teaching practices, and academic supports promote persistence, completion, and student mobility.

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

Criterion 1. Certificate, undergraduate, graduate, and/or professional programs leading to a degree or other recognized higher education credential: a) designed to foster a coherent student learning experience and to promote synthesis of learning; b) assigned a reasonably approximate number of credit hours for the amount of work completed by a student; and include sufficient course content and program length appropriate to the objectives of the degree or other credential.

Academic programs at the College are intentionally designed, coherent, and provide sufficient time for students to achieve program learning outcomes and successfully earn degrees, certificates, or microcredentials. The Curriculum Committee governs the process by which programs are created and revised; all new programs are also discussed and voted upon by the full faculty and College Senate and are approved by the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, the College President, and the Board of Trustees (3.1). TC3 offers 26 Associates of Arts or Sciences (A.A./A.S.) degrees, 12 Applied Associates of Sciences (A.A.S.) degrees, 8 Certificates, and 16 microcredentials. Degree programs require that students complete 60-64 credit hours, and certificates and microcredentials require the completion of 26-35 credit hours and 6-18 credit hours, respectively. Every degree, certificate, and microcredential program has an audit sheet (3.2)(update) that lists the requirements in sequence and a curriculum that shows the connection between course-, program-, and institutional-level student learning outcomes. Certificates and Associate's degrees comply with SUNY and State Department of Education (NYSED) requirements (3.3);(3.4). All certificate and Associates-level programs, including the recently approved Health Science Professions A.S., are approved through College shared governance, SUNY, and New York State Education Department (NYSED) (3.5). Per SUNY guidelines, microcredentials are designed and approved at the College level (3.6). Microcredentials offer students opportunities to gain skills for career advancement and are designed to stack into degrees and to be responsive to local workforce needs (3.7).

The Curriculum Committee is the shared governance body providing faculty oversight of the review and approval of courses and programs. In response to faculty concerns about the efficiency and transparency of the curriculum creation and approval processes, the Curriculum Committee revised its bylaws in the spring of 2025 to clarify faculty roles on the Committee and to establish a timeline of curriculum review (3.8). Every course at the College has a Master Course Syllabus (MCS) that states the course description, credit hour assignment, student learning outcomes, essential topics, general education categories, and evaluation methods (3.9). Every instructor is trained to use the MCS as the foundation of their course, which ensures consistency of content according to the credit hour allotment no matter the modality (3.10). Furthermore, there is a section syllabus template that mandates that every section must follow the MCS (3.11). Instructors submit section syllabi for every course every semester, which are reviewed periodically by department chairs and by department chairs or the Provost's office prior to a teaching observation to ensure compliance (3.12). The Provost's Office maintains records of these section syllabi and of their review.

The Curriculum Committee updated the MCS template in Fall 2017 and again in 2021 to support a new assessment process, which is discussed in Standard V (3.13). To support the implementation of this new template, the Committee developed detailed instructions to guide faculty (3.14). Between 2021 and 2023, faculty revised 166 Master Course Syllabi through the Curriculum Committee using the new template, reflecting campus-wide commitment to consistent and outcomes-driven course design.

In 2023, the Division of Academic Affairs invested in Coursedog, a curriculum management software, which has helped streamline the curriculum development and revision process (3.15). After an implementation process that included several training sessions in 2024-25, all curriculum development has since gone through Coursedog. The process requires review by the Academic Assessment Committee to ensure that curriculum proposals include assessable SLOs; appropriate mapping to PLOs, ILOs (for service courses), and SUNY General Education Outcomes (as applicable); and appropriate methods of assessment. The new process provides greater transparency throughout the curriculum process to all stakeholders and helps to foster richer discussions regarding the curriculum.

The College ensures that the credit hours assigned to a course are adhered to by scheduling classes in a block schedule and reviewing compliance every term as part of the schedule creation process (3.16);(3.17). This section schedule complies with the regulations for contact hours per credit following the Carnegie minutes model (3.18);(3.19) and SUNY's guidance on credit hour assignment (3.20). Students can access credit hour information through the Academic Catalog online (3.21). All concurrent enrollment sections are required to meet the minimum minutes requirement, confirmed when instructors submit section syllabi with content calendar and again when schools report their class schedule in the summer

COVID-era restrictions led the College to develop additional course modalities, such as synchronous online classes and hyflex classes, to supplement fully in-person, asynchronous online, and hybrid in-person/online modalities (3.22). An online course shell in the College's LMS, Brightspace, is generated for all sections, including fully in-person, to provide a common structure for instructors to store section syllabi and gradebooks for students to access. To lower costs for students, most courses utilize low or no cost course materials, including open educational resources (OER).

Criterion 2. Student learning experiences that are designed, delivered, and assessed by faculty and/or other appropriate professionals who are: a) rigorous and effective in teaching, assessment of student learning, scholarly inquiry, and service, as appropriate to the institution's mission, goals, and policies; b) qualified for the positions they hold and the work they do; c) sufficient in number with a core of faculty and/or other appropriate professionals with sufficient responsibility to the institution to assure the continuity and coherence of the institution's educational programs; d) provided with and utilize sufficient opportunities, resources, and support for professional growth and innovation; e) reviewed regularly and equitably based on written, disseminated, clear, and fair criteria, expectations, policies, and procedures;

The College faculty's foci are teaching, student advising, and service, and the specific expectations for faculty are enumerated in the contracts of the Faculty Association (3.23) and the Adjunct Association (3.24) and in the College Teaching Manual (3.25). The two contracts contain employment terms and titles, College policies, rights and privileges, roles and responsibilities, and contractual details while the Teaching Manual outlines instructor credential requirements, minimum faculty responsibilities, and best practices for the design and delivery of courses and course materials. The Provost's Office assesses faculty adherence to these requirements at several points, including at the time of hire, via early career observations, and through additional check-ins and observations depending on full-time or adjunct status and rank. In the last

five years, the College has increased investment in academic excellence and the pursuit of successful student outcomes through the hiring of an Assistant Provost and a temporary Assistant Dean whose duties include some of this assessment work. In Fall 2026, this work will transition to three Academic Deans.

TC3 faculty must meet the minimum recommendations from SUNY and NYSED (3.26);(3.27). In most cases, these requirements include a master's degree in the field of specialization. Twenty-six percent of full-time faculty and 28% of adjunct faculty at the College exceed minimum degree requirements, and 23% of full-time faculty and 19% of adjunct faculty possess a terminal degree in their field is (3.28). Credentials of full-time and adjunct faculty are reviewed as part of the College's academic program review (APR) cycle to ensure they are appropriate for the field of specialization and the level of the programmatic offering (3.29). Consistent with NACEP accreditation requirements, academic departments review the credentials of CollegeNow instructors to ensure alignment with credentialing expectations for courses (3.30).

The College currently has 47 full-time teaching faculty. On average, full-time faculty teach 16.5 credit hours per semester, which is 1.5 credits over the contractual base workload of 15 credits per semester (3.31). This average does not include administrative credit releases. In the 2025-26 academic year, 11 department chairs were each provided with 12 credit hours of administrative release time. In the 2026-27 academic year, the Academic Affairs will be transitioning to an academic dean structure consisting of three administrative deans overseeing three schools within the College and reducing the number of faculty department chairs. This structure will result in a higher percentage of classes being taught by full-time faculty and will better support faculty by providing oversight and additional resources for teaching and learning. Overall, the College has sufficient faculty to teach across all the programs offered at the College. Due to a retirement, two programs, Communications & Media Arts AS and Digital Media AS, are currently without full-time faculty teaching core courses, though there is full-time faculty oversight of the curriculum as faculty in the department consider the future of these degrees.

IPEDS data (3.32) (Figure 24) indicate that the College has higher instructional costs than SUNY community college peers; this is due to a variety of factors including its lower student to faculty ratios as well as the intentional decision to keep class caps at 10 for developmental courses and between 20-30 students for the rest. IPEDS Human Resources data indicates that while the College's percentage of diverse faculty is low, it is comparable to our peer institutions (20260000_S3_Li HR IPEDS figure).

The College offers a variety of professional development opportunities for staff and faculty. The primary source of internal professional development is the College Teaching Center, the programming of which includes mentorships, team projects, student panels, workshops on pedagogy, grant opportunities, presentations and roundtables on relevant current educational topics, and a regional conference (3.33) (3.34) (3.35). Per NACEP accreditation requirements, CollegeNow instructors attend annual professional development facilitated by TC3 faculty in both on-campus and remote formats (3.36);(3.37). Faculty also have access to external professional development opportunities through entities like SUNY's Center for Professional Development, which offers courses, workshops, and webinars addressing such topics as online teaching, digital accessibility, assessment, and artificial intelligence (3.38). As a result of these professional development opportunities, faculty have initiated, implemented, or completed several projects that have resulted in faculty collaboration across disciplines, updated and improved pedagogical practices, and learning that is shared campus-wide (3.39). Additional professional development geared towards improving student outcomes and retention and completion metrics, specifically in English and math courses, has included faculty participation at Guided Pathways and Achieving the Dream conferences.

To ensure that students have a rigorous learning experience across modalities, the Provost's Office conducts observations of full-time and adjunct faculty according to a negotiated schedule (3.40). A working group of faculty and members of the Provost's office created the class observation tool based on discussions about the definition of excellent teaching within each modality, and how it can be assessed (3.41). Responding to concerns from the Adjunct Faculty union that the Provost's Office was not regularly observing adjunct faculty, department chairs began observing adjuncts within their departments, resulting in more timely and productive observations. Within the new dean structure, the three academic deans will be responsible for these observations in the future. While specific observation results are confidential, there are opportunities for discussing trends and innovations for the benefit of continuous improvement of the pedagogy; for example, the Associate Provost has invited exemplary faculty to discuss strategies in the CTC, department meetings, and at the Adjunct Convocation (3.42). Consistent with NACEP accreditation, TC3 CollegeNow faculty liaisons observe concurrent enrollment instructors in their first year teaching for the College and then every three years (3.43);(3.44). In collaboration with the faculty, the Director of CollegeNow addresses any concerns through the implementation of improvement plans or discontinuation of the concurrent enrollment course. Faculty liaisons use observations to inform professional development topics for CollegeNow instructors within the discipline.

To ensure regular evaluation of student experiences, the College uses Watermark to administer course evaluations (3.45). Results show that respondents are generally satisfied with the instruction of their courses because the average response is over 4.0 on a scale of 1-5. Evaluations are anonymous, allowing students to share constructive feedback on course content and instruction (3.46). Results are available to both the Provost's Office and individual faculty after final grades have been submitted and are used to support reflection, continuous improvement, and professional growth (3.47). However, while student evaluation results may be used by the Provost in faculty assessment, benchmarked survey results are not, presenting an opportunity for process assessment and improvement. In addition to observations of faculty and student evaluations, full-time faculty also provide their own reflections on their teaching and teaching evaluations in their annual reports to the Provost's Office. Concurrent enrollment students complete course evaluations through an online form (3.48), yielding a high response rate of almost two-thirds (61% Fall 2024; 59% Spring 2025; 64% Fall 2025) (3.49). Overall, students indicate high levels of satisfaction with the course and instructor; for example, about 85% rate their instructor as excellent. Each instructor receives a summary of their results (3.50) and the Director of CollegeNow uses these to inform follow-up and recommendations for all instructors.

The Faculty Association contract specifies that promotion is based upon teaching excellence, advising, and service (3.23). Historically, the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs has made the decision about promotion and continuing appointment of full-time faculty based on a review of faculty portfolios. However, the College and the Faculty Association are currently discussing revisions to the tenure and promotion processes as both parties recognize that the process needs refinement to clarify expectations, to involve peer faculty, and to embed these processes within faculty shared governance. Adjunct faculty are also eligible for tenure and promotion through a process outlined in their contract (3.24).

The Annual Program Review (APR) process involves assessment of various aspects of the academic program and student learning experiences, including assessments of the curriculum, student enrollment and success metrics, skills analysis of the curriculum, and the personnel needs of the program. The College's investment in skilled institutional research personnel, and analytics tools such as Power BI, allowed for a significant

revision of the APR template to expand use of internal enrollment, success, and retention data as well as external transfer and job forecasting data to evaluate the program health and identify opportunities for improvement (3.29). The chairs' annual program reports mirror the APR template to allow the annual data to be used in aggregate for the APR. Chairs also rely on external bodies' advice to develop and review program curriculum. For workforce-focused programs, such as the Hotel & Restaurant Management A.A.S. or Paralegal A.A.S. degree programs, advisory boards consisting of local industry representatives contribute their expertise on current employee knowledge and skill areas (3.51). For transfer programs, such as the Communication & Media Arts A.S. program, chairs often develop relationships with transfer institutions to remain updated on curricular changes (3.52). Moreover, the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) affirms the Nursing A.A.S. degree program's quality through a regular accreditation cycle, the next of which will occur in 2027 (3.53);(3.54). The Chemical Dependency Counseling A.A.S. program must meet requirements for licensing through NYSED.

As noted above, the student-to-faculty ratio at the College is lower than its peers, which is a driver of higher instructional costs (3.32) (Figure 24). Yet, examining expenses per FTE in IPEDS data indicates that instructional costs are significantly lower at TC3 than at its peers. However, these data are misleading as they include the large number of concurrent enrollment FTEs. Therefore, IPEDS expense ratios (instructional cost relative to total cost) provide a more accurate picture, demonstrating that the College has been consistently reducing instructional cost through deliberate schedule management over the last several years as enrollment has declined (3.55) (slide 9). To bring student-to-faculty ratios closer to those of peer institutions and to build greater financial stability, the Associate Provost conducted an analysis of low enrolled courses, revealing that the College runs a significant portion of its course schedule with sections of fewer than ten students, many of which serve programs with few students (3.56). In response to concerns about low enrolled programs and sections, the Provost's Office initiated a health-check analysis of academic programs by faculty, which resulted in several programs being discontinued through the shared governance process, including the International Business A.S., Wine Marketing A.A.S., International Studies A.S., Liberal Arts and Sciences-Women & Gender Studies A.S., Broadcast Production-Radio A.A.S., Broadcast Production-Television A.A.S., Recreation Leadership A.S., and Outdoor Recreation A.S. degree programs (3.57). Additionally, the Culinary Arts A.A.S. program was deactivated and is undergoing review. Discontinuation of these programs allows the College to reduce the percentage of low-enrolled courses and bring the student-to-faculty ratio closer to peers while balancing the needs for robust pedagogy (3.58) (Figure 30).

Criterion 3. academic programs of study that are clearly and accurately described in official publications of the institution in a way that students are able to understand and follow degree and program requirements and expected time to completion.

The College clearly communicates degree requirements and time to degree completion to prospective and current students. Each program has its own webpage listing all necessary courses and credits (3.59), as well as average salary information, major employers, top transfer schools, articulation agreements, scholarship opportunities, and job market demand (3.60).

Students can track their progress, including their fulfillment of SUNY General Education requirements, through DegreeWorks (3.61), a tool used across SUNY. DegreeWorks includes a planning feature allowing

students and advisors to develop individualized, semester-by-semester academic plans aimed at timely graduation and aligned with their career or transfer goals (3.62). These plans serve as roadmaps to graduation and are regularly updated in consultation with academic advisors and according to curriculum changes. A “What If” tool enables students to explore how their coursework would apply to other degree programs, supporting informed decisions about program changes. In addition to DegreeWorks, detailed descriptions of degree requirements and course descriptions are published in the online College Catalog, which serves as the official institutional record. The Catalog provides access to program audit sheets, including options to view and print degree program sheets, supporting transparency, consistent advising practices, and clear communication of curricular requirements to students and stakeholders (3.63).

Overall, following COVID-19 pandemic-related enrollment declines, College enrollment has stabilized and is slowly growing, largely driven by SUNY Reconnect, the new Health Science Professions A.S. program, and redesigned enrollment processes. In the last four years, several A.S. programs across many disciplines have enrollment greater than 20 students (Table 2). Liberal Arts & Sciences-General Studies is the College’s largest academic program by enrollment, partly because the program is where students interested in nursing and health professions have been assigned due to the College not having a pre-nursing or other health professions degree programs (until Spring 2026). To better serve those students, and to meet local workforce needs, the College opened a transfer-oriented Health Science Professions A.S. degree program (3.64).

Name of Degree Program	Program Type	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
General Studies	AS	346	368	390	408
Business Administration	AS	73	73	62	64
Sports Management	AS	30	36	34	41
Human Services	AS	32	31	35	40
Computer Science	AS	18	31	27	35
Criminal Justice	AS	35	36	43	34
Biology	AS	34	37	26	32
Elementary Education	AS	13	22	30	31
Psychology & Social Sciences	AS	57	38	46	30
Adolescent Education	AS	11	22	19	27
Engineering Science	AS	15	30	18	22
Exercise Studies	AS	14	15	25	20
Environmental Studies	AS	22	17	20	19
Source: Internal College Data (Power BI SEP dashboard)					

In Summer 2025, SUNY developed the Reconnect program focused on degree programs in fields with high employment demands in New York State. The initiative provides free college for students 25 or older who do not have a previous college degree and who enroll in a SUNY Reconnect eligible degree program. The College has 13 such programs (3.65), including the Chemical Dependency Counselling A.A.S., the Computer Information Systems A.A.S., the Computer Science A.S., the Computer Support Specialist A.A.S., the Construction & Environmental Technology A.A.S., the Engineering Science A.S., the Environmental Studies

A.S., the Health Science Professions A.S., the Nursing A.A.S., the Sustainable Farming & Food Systems A.A.S., the three Teacher Education Transfer A.S. degree programs. Table 3 shows growth in SUNY Reconnect-eligible programs enrollment since its inception in Fall 2022. The trends reflect increasing participation from adult learners, consistent with the initiative’s focus on workforce-aligned education for returning students, while also maintaining engagement among traditional-age students (3.66). While Nursing remains the largest A.A.S. program, other A.A.S. programs, particularly those eligible for Reconnect, have seen recent enrollment increases (Table 4). The College has immediate plans for three additional Reconnect programs in Electrical Engineering Technology, Cybersecurity, and Semiconductor Technology.

Table 3. Enrollment in TC3 SUNY Reconnect programs reflects recent changes in associates degrees that are Career and Technical Education focused (3.66)				
Student Group (Age)	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
Under 25	169	209	202	227
25 and older	205	213	208	325
Total	374	422	410	552

Table 4. A.A.S. programs with total Fall enrollment greater than 20 (4-year snapshot)					
Name of Degree Program	Program Type	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
Nursing	AAS	157	161	160	173
Chemical Dependency Counselling	AAS	30	27	27	87
Business Administration	AAS	41	39	49	58
Computer Information Systems	AAS	34	30	23	44
Paralegal	AAS	19	26	22	26
Accounting	AAS	10	16	24	23
Sustainable Farming & Food Systems	AAS	6	10	10	23
Early Childhood Education	AAS	24	32	26	21
Criminal Justice	AAS	23	22	28	19
Source: Internal College Data (Power BI SEP Dashboard)					

TC3’s career and technical education-focused (CTE) degree programs receive funding support from the Carl D. Perkins grant. This funding is used to strengthen curriculum and fulfill equipment requirements for degree programs including computer science, nursing, new media, graphic design, environmental studies, electrical engineering technology, and nursing. The College uses the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (3.67) to carry out an in-depth labor market analysis of CTE program needs assessment that incorporates input from key internal and external stakeholders (3.68).

In response to the changes in degree enrollment patterns, the Provost’s Office is working with faculty to consolidate some programs, with the goal of maintaining fewer, more robust offerings, informed by APRs, enrollment health checks, instructional cost, and formal program discontinuation analyses (3.69);(3.70);(3.71). Using this data-informed process, faculty, the Curriculum Committee, and the College Senate have approved the discontinuation of select programs (3.72);(3.73);(3.74).

Institutional Research analyzed the number of credits students earn upon graduation (3.75). On average, students graduate having earned slightly fewer credits than the program requirement (–3.0 credits), reflecting efficient degree completion rather than excess accumulation. Students bring in minimal credits from prior learning (0.5 credits on average) but rely more heavily on transfer credits (16.1 credits) and CollegeNow dual enrollment (7.6 credits) to meet degree requirements. With an average of 58.3 credits earned directly at TC3 against an average program requirement of 61.3 credits, the data suggests that students are strategically combining TC3 coursework with external and CollegeNow credits, supporting timely completion while reinforcing the importance of transfer articulation, advising, and pathway clarity (Table 5). This is particularly evident in high-enrollment programs such as Business Administration, Criminal Justice, Liberal Arts & Sciences-General Studies, and Nursing. In contrast, several STEM and education-oriented transfer programs exhibit positive excess credits and longer time to degree, largely because many first-year courses require prerequisite coursework that students often have not completed upon entry, increasing both total credits attempted and time to graduation. To address this, STEM faculty are reviewing prerequisites; for example, a focused “pre-A&P” 3-credit biology/chemistry course is being developed as a prerequisite option for anatomy & physiology, that can be taken in lieu of the current 7-credit biology and chemistry requirement. Successful graduation outcomes are concentrated in a small number of programs, while several low-completion programs provide limited longitudinal data, reinforcing the importance of guided pathways, proactive advising, and curricular alignment to support timely completion (3.76).

Table 5. Average number of credits upon graduation (3.76)	
Average Program Credits	61.3
Average number of credits transferred from other institutions upon graduation	16.1
Average number of credits earned at (TC3)	58.3
Average number of credits earned at TC3 through concurrently enrollment	7.6
Comparison between average credits earned (TC3) versus program credits	-3.0

TC3’s dual enrollment program, CollegeNow, is a significant educational offering for the community, primarily through its Concurrent Enrollment program, in which high school instructors are certified by TC3 faculty and the Provost’s Office to teach TC3 courses. The program’s NACEP accreditation demonstrates adherence to national best practices in curriculum, faculty, and student support (3.77). Most students take classes in their high schools, while a smaller number take courses taught directly by TC3 faculty in-person or online. The College also partners with a consortium of schools on a grant-funded early college high school called P-TECH, which is located on campus and supports students from ninth grade through the completion of a degree in an aligned field. Concurrent enrollment headcount increased from 2,987 students in Fall 2022 to a peak of 3,381 in 2024 before a slight decline to 3,249 in Fall 2025, indicating overall stability with gradual demographic change. Students identifying as White remain the majority, while participation among Asian, Black, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Nonresident Alien students show steady growth, reflecting increasing diversity in the high school pipeline. By gender, females consistently outnumber males, though male participation has steadily increased, narrowing the gap (3.78).

The non-credit offerings at TC3 are organized into three main categories: Open Enrollment, Customized/Contract Training, and Non-Credit Remedial. Open Enrollment courses are available to the

public and include professional development and career training delivered through in-person and asynchronous online formats with courses taught by TC3 faculty, independent contractors, or third-party providers (Table 6a); enrollment varies depending on the number of offerings (Table 6b) (3.79). Customized or contract training is local employer-driven, where organizations hire TC3 to deliver training specifically tailored to their workforce needs, offered in both in-person and online modalities. Non-credit remedial courses, while not carrying academic credit, are SUNY-approved offerings that generate FTEs for the College and must meet formal approval requirements.

Table 6a. Recent TC3 non-credit open enrollment offerings		
Non-credit offerings (Course #)	Offering type & instructional type	Years offered
Wilderness First Responder (1)	Open Enrollment; Contract Instructor	2021-22; 2022-23
Project Management Fundamentals (2)	Open Enrollment; Contract Instructor	2021-22; 2022-23
Phlebotomy Technician (3)	Open Enrollment; Third-party vendor	2022-23; 2023-24; 2024-25
Clinical Medical Assistant Fundamentals (4)	Open Enrollment; TC3 Faculty	2024-25
Hybrid Wilderness First Responder (5)	Open Enrollment; Contract Instructor	2022-23; 2023-24
CNA Pre-Apprenticeship (6)	Open Enrollment; TC3 Faculty	2023-24
Drone Regulations and Operations (7)	Open Enrollment; TC3 Faculty	2022-23
Certified Nursing Assistant (8)	Open Enrollment; TC3 Faculty	2021-22; 2022-23; 2023-24; 2024-25
Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (9)	Open Enrollment; TC3 Faculty	2021-22

Table 6b. Four-year participation in non-credit open enrollment offerings (source: internal enrollment data)				
Age	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
< = 24 years old	14	14	12	7
25 + years old	19	39	27	14
Not specified	2	8	0	0
Total	35	61	39	21
Course # (from Table 6a)	1; 2; 8; 9	1; 2; 3; 5; 7; 8	3; 5; 6; 8	3; 4; 8

Criterion 4. Sufficient Learning Experiences and Resources

The College's academic support system, including tutoring, library, and disability services, provides the necessary resources for students to be successful in their academic goals as outlined in the degree program sheets (3.2), master course syllabi (3.9), and section syllabi (3.80). CollegeNow students, instructors, and librarians have access to TC3's library, tutoring, and disability services (<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/collegenow/student-support-services>). The Baker Center for Learning provides a central physical space on campus for the Library, Tutoring Center, and Access and Equity Office.

The Library, with its 3.0 FTE of librarians plus 3.5 FTE of additional staff, provides research instruction and reference help, as well as textbooks and other class materials for loan (3.81). Librarians specialize in subject areas for which they serve as liaisons to academic departments. In this capacity, they routinely consult program faculty to determine the sufficiency of library materials for the curriculum; an important step in the curriculum development workflow is a library review step in which the librarians evaluate new course proposals to ensure the library has adequate resources. To supplement the existing collection (3.82), the

library offers both quick delivery purchase-on-demand and interlibrary loan services through its relationship with SUNY’s Office of Library and Information Services, as described on www.sunyconnect.suny.edu. Librarians maintain a robust catalog of bibliographic instruction materials on the library website, including research help (3.83), best practices and instruction for dealing with plagiarism (3.84), and resources related to artificial intelligence and education (3.85). Upon request, librarians provide targeted research instruction for classes and create online LibGuides and handouts to supplement instruction (3.86).

The Tutoring Center, which is Level 3-certified by the College Reading and Learning Association, includes the College’s Writing Center in addition to support for other courses. It offers in-person and remote sessions facilitated by both peer and professional tutors (3.87);(3.88) in the form of one-on-one tutoring and supplemental instruction for specific courses (3.89);(3.90). Beginning in Fall 2026, most professional tutors will be paired with courses with high drop/fail/withdrawal (DFW) rates, such as first-year writing and math courses, and anatomy & physiology for nursing students, to prioritize success in gateway courses, thus boosting early momentum metrics, and hopefully retention (20260000_S3_Aaron Tutor Proposal).

The Access and Equity Office provides students with appropriate accommodations and supports faculty in making their courses accessible in alignment with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (3.91). Recognizing that some students, especially adult learners or individuals from low-income households, may lack recent formal documentation of learning disabilities, in Spring 2023, the office consulted with faculty to adopt a “social justice” approach to identifying needs for accommodations, which places emphasis upon professional evaluation of a student’s lived experience, including input from the student, faculty, and support staff (3.91). About 20% of students have registered a disability with Access and Equity (Table 7).

Table 7. Students registered with the Access & Equity Office (2021-2025 from NYSED 2h-2; 2025-2026 internal data SEP)					
Academic Year	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Number of students with disabilities in occupationally specific programs	143	136	154	152	153
Number of students with disabilities in other degree-credit programs	331	319	380	367	359
Number of students with disabilities (core enrolled)	474	455	534	519	512
Total number of students enrolled (core enrolled; all categories)	2382	2473	2598	2596	2674
Proportion of student population with disabilities (core enrolled; all categories)	20%	18%	20%	20%	19%

The College expanded its distance learning portfolio significantly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic to include modalities such as hyflex and online synchronous classes. Student participation in distance learning has remained high post-COVID, though in some cases lower than at peer institutions (Figure 1) (3.93).

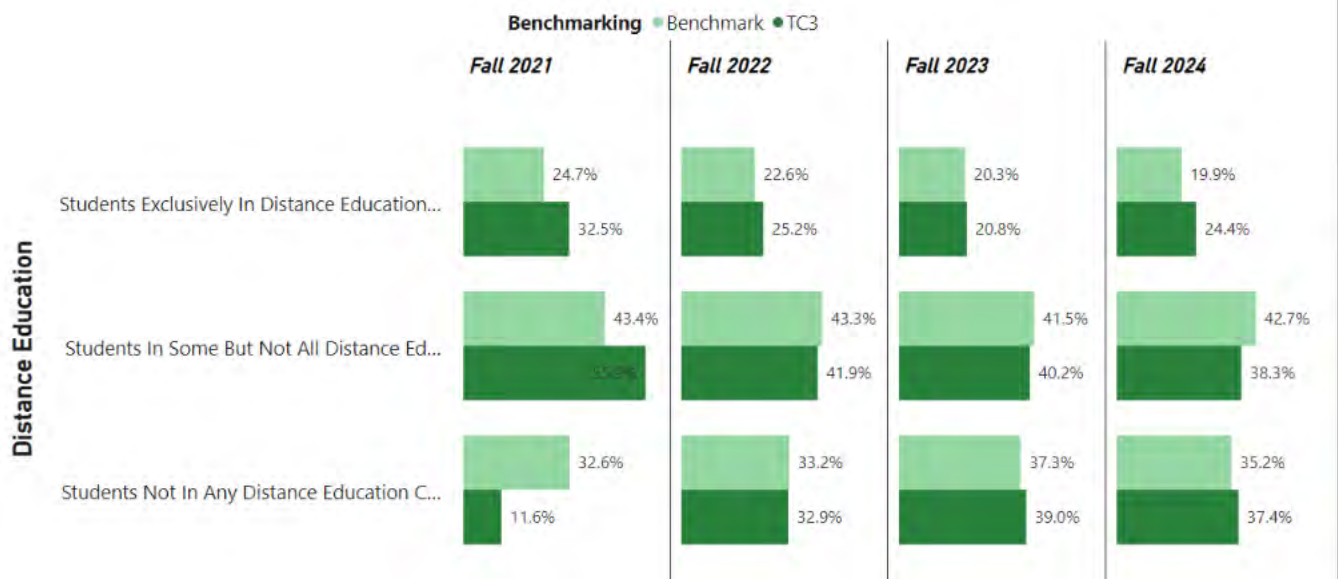


Figure 1: Fall enrollment (degree-seeking students) by distance education. Data source: IPEDS Fall Enrollment Survey.

The College offered online asynchronous courses for several years prior to the pandemic and has provided professional development for these courses through SUNY, TC3's instructional design team, and the College Teaching Center. Because of the rapid expansion in distance learning in 2020, more instructors began teaching in online or hybrid modalities with support from the instructional designer and the library team. Since then, student surveys, focus groups, and online instruction best practices suggested that faculty needed additional training and qualifications to teach online courses (3.94). The Provost's Office created a working group with teaching faculty and the College's instructional designer to create an Online Teaching Policy during Spring 2024, which included the stipulation that the Provost's Office would determine the eligibility of instructors to teach online (3.95). In 2024-2025, the Associate Provost facilitated a project to implement that policy, including developing training, templates, and rubrics based on best practices and faculty input (3.96). The required training for the SUNY-wide adopted LMS, Brightspace, was launched in October 2025, and assessment of that training will occur in Summer 2026. One of the recommendations of the working group was that every instructor should renew their training every four years (3.97). The introduction of this required training will mitigate students' struggles with navigating the College's LMS and will provide a platform for continuous improvement of the teaching and learning of the College's distance education (3.98). Establishing faculty credentials for distance education, bolstering distance education technology and improving student experience with online courses represent continuing improvements in which the College is actively engaged. These initiatives also reflect the College's Strategic Direction 2: [To] invest in professional development, physical infrastructure, and technologies to strengthen flexible learning modalities, measuring impact through academic assessment process, retention, and completion rates within courses using these modalities by the beginning of Fall 2027. The College ensures student access to faculty for asynchronous courses by requiring each instructor to hold office hours, by creating a Teams site for each course that allows real time communication, and by requiring instructors to list a preferred method of communication in their syllabi. The online teaching policy requires regular and substantive interaction (RSI), best practices for which are part of the required online training for faculty (3.98). Faculty teaching asynchronous courses are observed, and those observations provide opportunities to address any concerns around regular and substantive interaction or RSI.

The College offers tutoring, library, tech support, accommodation, counseling, and career and academic advising services through online, live remote, and in-person means for all students, including those in distance education (3.90). The College currently has eleven programs that may be completed fully online and 18% of its core students are exclusively enrolled in distance education courses (3.93). While support services are provided online, they are not intentionally connected with fully online degree programs and courses. The next step in supporting students in distance learning is to deliberately align these supports. For example, the Provost announced in Spring 2026, a plan to pair professional tutors with online sections of courses with high DFW rates; the schedule and structure for the tutoring will be based upon the specific needs of the students in those sections (20260000_S3_Aaron Tutor Proposal). With SUNY Reconnect, the College is seeing an increase in the number of adult students who need flexible schedules for course offerings and related academic supports. In Summer 2026, the College is piloting free summer bridge courses for adult learners to brush up on English and math skills within an online environment, with extra supports to build confidence with distance education (3.99).

The College assesses the effectiveness of distance education courses in the same way as assessment of courses in other modalities: students submit course evaluations, instructors submit SLO assessments for each course, and success outcomes are equally tracked. The department assessment report and program review tools include opportunities for chairs to disaggregate and these metrics across modalities. The College's revised teaching observation document also accounts for different distance modalities.

Criterion 5. At institutions that offer undergraduate education, a general education program, free standing or integrated into academic disciplines, that a) offers a sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience, expanding their cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity, and preparing them to make well-reasoned judgments outside as well as within their academic field; b) offers a curriculum designed so that students acquire and demonstrate essential skills including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy, Consistent with mission, the general education program also includes the study of values, ethics, and diverse perspective.

As a member of the SUNY system, the College follows SUNY's General Education (GE) requirements that, in turn, align with those of MSCHE (3.100). The SUNY GE Framework includes 10 Knowledge and Skills Areas and three Core Competencies (<https://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/academic-policies/general-education/suny-ge/>). All students earning Associate's degrees must fulfill four required Knowledge and Skills Areas: Communications (both written and oral); Mathematics & Quantitative Reasoning; Natural Sciences & Scientific Reasoning; and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Social Justice (DEISJ). Beyond the SUNY-mandated GE requirements, TC3 faculty approved five Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and a TC3 Core curriculum. The ILOs overlap with SUNY GE Knowledge and Skills Areas and Core Competencies and students' fulfillment of them is built into program curriculum (<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/academic-records/general-education>). These ILOs were adopted in Spring 2020 through the College's shared governance system (3.101). The TC3 Core requires that students in

degree programs take ENGL101, as well as a course in oral communication, humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences; these Core requirements are related to SUNY GE Knowledge and Skill areas, and students fulfill them by completing the required four GE and an additional three Knowledge and Skill Areas. In total, students earning A.S. and A.A. degrees are required to earn at least 30 GE credits while students in A.A.S. degrees are required to earn 20 GE credits, though they are advised to complete more if they intend to transfer to a SUNY four-year school with junior standing (3.102).

TC3 incorporates SUNY GE requirements directly into its Master Course Syllabus template, ensuring that every proposed GE course is systematically reviewed for alignment with SUNY-mandated Core Competencies and Knowledge and Skills Areas. Faculty must indicate whether and how the course addresses SUNY GE requirements and explicitly link the SLOs of those requirements to the course student learning outcomes (SLOs) (3.13), allowing for the assessment of GE requirements through the SLO assessment process. This approach reflects the SUNY GE intent to integrate Core Competencies across the curriculum, as they are addressed in a wide range of courses and disciplines rather than confined to a single academic area. To propose a new or existing course for SUNY GE designation, faculty first consult with department colleagues, before bringing before shared governance (Curriculum and Academic Assessment Committees). These discussions include all impacted constituencies, including adjunct faculty, to ensure broad, cross-disciplinary input and consistent implementation of SUNY-GE competencies across programs (3.103).

The College introduced a standardized curriculum map template (3.104) in Fall 2021, requiring all programs to document how SLOs align with PLOs and ILOs, and how they fulfill SUNY GE requirements. All chairs were trained in completing the forms. Assessment of SUNY GE outcomes is coordinated through a structured and reflective process led by the Academic Assessment Chair, who oversees the evaluation of student achievement of these outcomes and ensures that course-level learning aligns with SUNY's systemwide expectations. The assessment process, discussed in greater detail in Standard V, provides a regular mechanism for analyzing results, implementing improvements, maintaining academic rigor across all GE offerings, and sharing results to close the assessment loop (3.105);(3.106).

The last comprehensive revision of the College's GE program occurred during the 2021–2022 academic year, following SUNY's updated GE framework. Since that revision, the College has developed and updated over 140 GE courses across SUNY Knowledge and Skills areas and Core Competencies. These courses reflect TC3's intentional integration of core competencies across disciplines to ensure that students develop essential transferable skills alongside disciplinary knowledge. A list of newly developed courses and those approved for SUNY Knowledge and Skills and Core Competencies designation is provided in (3.107) and (3.108).

Because the College is in the initial stages of considering establishing A.O.S degree programs for which some of the TC3 Core requirements may not be fully relevant, in 2026-2027, the Curriculum Committee and faculty body will determine whether the TC3 Core (<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/academic-records/general-education>) should be amended or discontinued. Eliminating the TC3 Core may also affect A.A.S. programs by increasing the credit hours available for technical electives.

Criterion 6. in institutions that offer graduate professional education, opportunities for the development of research, scholarship, and independent thinking, provided by faculty and/or other professionals with credentials appropriate to graduate-level curricula

The College does not offer graduate degrees.

Criterion 7. adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval on any student learning opportunities designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers

The College does not use any third-party providers to deliver college-credit instruction.

To supplement non-credit continuing education, the College engages with carefully selected third-party providers— Ed2Go, Condensed Curriculum International, and UGotClass—through a deliberate and structured vetting process that ensures alignment with institutional standards, academic quality expectations, and student learning outcomes. These partnerships were established prior to 2019 and represent long-standing relationships that support the College’s Mission. Within the past five years, two of the associated contracts have been formally updated (3.109);(3.110). The College’s Continuing Education office is undertaking a comprehensive review to update remaining agreements to ensure consistency, compliance, and alignment with current institutional policies. All contracts undergo administrative review and require approval by the President prior to execution. Vendors are selected based on a comprehensive review of program offerings, services provided, pricing structure, customer and partner feedback, and alignment with institutional needs. This process ensures that third-party offerings meet the College’s expectations for quality, relevance, and value.

The College maintains institutional control over non-credit offerings. TC3-managed websites provide contact information for Continuing Education (Con Ed) staff, and all course offerings are determined, approved, and marketed by TC3 (3.111). Con Ed staff register students into the College’s student information system and verify attendance. Oversight mechanisms include regular communication with providers through email updates regarding student enrollment, progress, and course completion. Con Ed staff utilize dashboards to monitor student participation, track progress, and review course evaluation data in real time (3.112). Student feedback is a central component of oversight; Con Ed staff collect and review course evaluations to assess course quality, instructional effectiveness, and student satisfaction. Should concerns arise, Con Ed communicates with students to clarify issues and with providers to resolve concerns, reinforce expectations, or extend course access when appropriate (3.113). Approximately 13% of students in non-credit programming are taking courses delivered through third-party vendors, allowing TC3 to maintain focused oversight while leveraging external expertise as appropriate.

Criterion 8. Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of student learning experiences for all student populations.

With support from the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness, the College assesses student learning experiences in several ways, including student surveys and various analyses completed by

faculty, Chairs, and the Academic Assessment Committee. Each type of assessment has driven important faculty-led change at the College.

Student satisfaction surveys are administered approximately every three years to assess both the academic experience and those of the academic supports available to students. Results from the 2024 SUNY Student Satisfaction Survey results indicate strong overall student satisfaction, with mean ratings in General College Satisfaction remaining high and ranking in the top half among Small Community Colleges. Students reported high levels of satisfaction with the College overall (mean 4.08) and that their academic experiences met expectations (mean 4.05)(3.116). Additionally, 97.8% of respondents rated attendance at scheduled classes positively, and 88.1% rated class size favorably (3.117). However, the same survey indicated room for improvement in applied learning, which informed TC3's creation of a position overseeing the development of applied learning experiences, passage of an applied learning policy by Curriculum Committee and Faculty, and the inclusion within both the Strategic Plan and Academic Primary Plan of a goal to have an applied learning opportunity in every A.A.S. program.

The College employs an Annual Chair Report process, a five-year Academic Program Review, and the SUNY GE assessment cycle to evaluate academic quality and promote continuous improvement. The Annual Chair Report (3.114) and the APR (3.115) provide in-depth evaluation of programs using institutional data on enrollment, retention, completion, employment outcomes, curriculum alignment, and cost analyses compiled by the Provost's Office and analyzed by program chairs. During this period, the College has also engaged in data reviews to study academic outcomes through several institutional projects that are designed to improve the student learning experience. Examples include the Guided Pathways initiative that helped improve the effectiveness of developmental education and more recently, both SUNY's Academic Momentum project and the College's engagement with Achieving the Dream. The College's process for developing the SEP and Strategic Plan also assessed the effectiveness of student learning experience by examining focus group data, survey data, and retention and completion metrics.

Chairs reports and program reviews have guided the development of new courses and updates to existing ones, the modification of degree or certificate requirements, and the reassessment of the viability of programs with low enrollment. Based on data-informed program reviews, the College has discontinued programs with limited demand, such as the Outdoor Recreation and Recreation Management A.S. program (3.118), while exploring and advancing new workforce-aligned offerings, including Health Science Professions A.S. program (3.119). In addition, the College implemented the Business & Industry Leadership Team (BILT) model—an employer-driven advisory framework—for the Construction and Environmental Technology A.A.S. program (3.120) to support curriculum updates and enhance the student learning experience, offering a model for Advisory Board engagement for other STEM applied programs.

A recent institutional project offers an additional example of how the College uses data-informed approaches to address student learning experiences. While preparing the SUNY Academic Momentum plan, a team of faculty and staff reviewed student success data in disaggregated formats to identify equity gaps and guide targeted interventions. As reflected in the December 2025 Academic Momentum presentation for the Diversity, Equity and Action Council (3.121)(update), outcomes are analyzed by race/ethnicity, gender, Pell status, as well as by gateway course completion, 30+ credit momentum, retention, and 100%/150% graduation rates. This analysis revealed persistent disparities in early academic momentum metrics, particularly among Pell-eligible students. The College also examined age, enrollment status, and modality (in-person, hybrid, online) to better understand structural factors influencing student progress. These were

used to develop specific interventions to help improve education effectiveness and academic supports that will be implemented over the next few years. As outlined in the Academic Momentum plan (3.121), approved strategies include expanded co-requisite developmental education and supplemental academic support, as well as scheduling strategies to pilot shorter terms to help improve student outcomes.

Since the last self-study, the College has reassessed and improved its academic administrative structure to strengthen support and oversight of effective teaching and learning. During the pandemic, the College transitioned to a chair model (with 12 chairs aligned with guided pathways communities, as compared to 25 programmatic chairs prior to 2019). However, this new structure was also unable to complete all administrative requirements necessary for program development and the concurrent need for faculty to focus on core teaching functions. Therefore, in 2025-26, the College and Faculty Association negotiated and approved a comprehensive academic reorganization, establishing three schools within the Division of Academic Affairs: the School of Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences; School of Business, Technology, and Science; and School of Nursing and Allied Health. National dean searches were launched to provide focused academic leadership for each school, with faculty and cross-divisional representation incorporated into the process to ensure broad input and shared governance. By aligning related disciplines under dedicated leadership, the restructuring aims to promote curricular coherence, oversight of program quality, and enhances coordination of academic support—ultimately improving instructional effectiveness and advancing student learning outcomes (3.122).

ALIGNMENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

Table 8. Standard-to-Institutional Priority Alignment			
MSCHE Standard / Criterion	Institutional Priority	Alignment Narrative	Representative Evidence
Standard 3 – Criterion 1	Academic Excellence	The College ensures academic rigor and coherence by using standardized curriculum design tools and governance review to keep programs current, credit-bearing expectations consistent, and learning outcomes aligned across courses and credentials.	NYSED/SUNY program requirements (3.3) (3.4); Master Course Syllabus template + instructions (3.13) (3.14); Curriculum Committee charge + Coursedog memo (3.8) (3.15).
Standard 3 – Criterion 1	Successful Student Outcomes	Clear sequencing and credit-hour integrity support predictable time-to-completion and reduce barriers caused by inconsistent expectations across sections/modalities, helping students progress efficiently toward credentials.	Block schedule + schedule creation process (3.16) (3.17); credit hour/contact time compliance (3.18) (3.123); section syllabus template + syllabus review (3.11) (3.12).
Standard 3 – Criterion 2	Academic Excellence	Faculty quality is maintained through credential standards, structured evaluation, and professional development systems that reinforce effective teaching and assessment practices aligned with institutional expectations.	Faculty credential guidelines + contracts + teaching manual (3.27) (3.23) (3.24) (3.25); teaching observation form + observation guidance (3.41) (3.124) (3.125).
Standard 3 – Criterion 2	Successful Student Outcomes	Regular faculty review and targeted development improve instructional consistency and student engagement, contributing to stronger course success, persistence, and progression—especially when scaled across high-enrollment sections and modalities.	College Teaching Center programming + mentorships (3.34) (3.35); SUNY CPD usage (3.38); course evaluations summary results (3.47).

Standard 3 – Criterion 3	Academic Excellence	The College promotes curricular transparency and advising accuracy through official publications and degree audit tools that clearly communicate requirements and institutional expectations.	Find My Program webpages (3.126); College Catalog (3.63); DegreeWorks (3.61).
Standard 3 – Criterion 3	Successful Student Outcomes	Degree planning and clear program roadmaps reduce mis-advisement and support on-time completion by enabling students to track progress, make informed program changes, and register in sequence.	DegreeWorks planning/“What If” functionality (3.61); audit sheets + curriculum mapping template (3.2); number of degrees (3.127)
Standard 3 – Criterion 4	Academic Excellence	Academic support units strengthen instructional quality and learning effectiveness by providing curated learning resources, targeted tutoring, and equitable access services that integrate with course expectations and academic standards.	Library collections info (3.81); tutoring services documentation (3.89) (3.90); Access & Equity webpage (3.91).
Standard 3 – Criterion 4	Successful Student Outcomes	By reducing barriers to learning (academic, accessibility, and modality-related), these services increase the likelihood of good academic standing, course completion, and retention for diverse student populations.	Internal GAS analysis for students with accommodations (3.92); Online Teaching Policy + implementation plan (3.95) (3.96); online training course outline (3.98).
Standard 3 – Criterion 5	Academic Excellence	SUNY/NYSED-aligned general education design and course-level mapping ensure students develop measurable foundational competencies (communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, critical thinking) embedded across the curriculum.	SUNY/NYSED/TC3 GE requirements (3.100) (3.128); Master Course Syllabus GE fields (3.13); SUNY GE assessment artifacts (3.105) (3.106).
Standard 3 – Criterion 5	Successful Student Outcomes	A coherent GE framework supports transfer readiness and workforce adaptability by ensuring students can demonstrate broadly applicable competencies within the first 60 credits and across programs.	Curriculum map template + chair training (3.104); list of new/updated GE courses (3.107) (3.108); TC3 Core review documentation (3.129).
Standard 3 – Criterion 7	Academic Excellence	The College preserves academic integrity in third-party offerings through institutional control of approval, monitoring, and evaluation processes that verify quality and alignment with TC3 expectations.	Third Party Oversight (3.112) TC3 Career and Technical Education Website (3.111)
Standard 3 – Criterion 7	Successful Student Outcomes	Continuous monitoring of participation, progress, and student feedback enables timely interventions and ensures third-party experiences remain effective pathways for skill development and completion.	Student Evaluations (3.113)
Standard 3 – Criterion 8	Academic Excellence	TC3 evaluates instructional and program effectiveness through systematic review cycles and governance processes that use evidence to refine curriculum, pedagogy, and learning supports.	Annual Chair Report + Program Review template (3.114) (3.115); Curriculum Committee charge + Coursedog memo (3.8) (3.15); faculty observation documentation (3.124).
Standard 3 – Criterion 8	Successful Student Outcomes	Disaggregated outcomes and satisfaction surveys analysis (race/ethnicity, gender, Pell, modality) drives targeted interventions to close equity gaps and improve retention, momentum, and completion.	Academic Momentum/DEAC summary presentation (3.121); SUNY Student Satisfaction Survey results (3.116) (3.117).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The College engages in a thoughtful, inclusive process to design a coherent curriculum, with sufficient supports, for academic and future success in compliance with the requirements of Standard III.

Furthermore, the College's approach to its curriculum and academic supports aligns with its Institutional Priorities (see below), which are in turn, aligned with our MVV and Strategic Plan. That said, there is always room for improvement. Below are highlights of some of our strengths and where the College intends to focus future efforts in relation to this Standard.

Strengths:

- The College maintains standardized master course syllabi, curriculum mapping, and governance review processes that ensure program coherence, credit-hour compliance, and alignment between course-, program-, and institutional-level learning outcomes.
- The Baker Commons model integrates library services, CRLA-certified tutoring, accessibility support, and modality-based learning resources, contributing to a structured academic support environment.
- Program review cycles, faculty observation processes, student evaluations, and disaggregated Academic Momentum analysis demonstrate ongoing evaluation of educational effectiveness and student outcomes.

Institutional Areas for Improvement:

- The Online Teaching Policy and training modules represent meaningful progress; however, quality assurance for online and hybrid instruction remains in early implementation stages.
- Although evaluation and observation processes are in place, tenure and promotion reform remains incomplete. Finalizing these processes is important for ensuring transparent advancement structures, faculty retention, and sustained instructional excellence.

Recommendations:

- Through shared governance, the College should strengthen existing academic quality by formalizing and refining its modality equivalency and quality assurance framework for teaching across all modalities. It should also define clear benchmarks for full-time faculty course coverage, integrating instructional cost, program demand, and annual budget and strategic enrollment planning cycles.
- The College should refine the current tenure and promotion framework by clarifying criteria, standardizing review procedures, reinforcing shared governance participation, and incorporating a formal effectiveness review.

STANDARD IV: Support of the Student Experience

Table 1. Standard 4 alignment with institutional priorities and strategic directions

Category	Alignment
Primary Institutional Priorities Addressed	• Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility • Create a caring, equitable, and engaged campus community
Strategic Directions Aligned	• Accountability & Transparency • Identity & Belonging
Focus of the Standard	Admissions, advising, financial aid, student services, equity, retention, completion, and effectiveness of student support systems

INTRODUCTION

The College is committed to providing accessible, high-quality education that empowers students from diverse backgrounds to achieve their academic and career goals. The College's open-admissions policy ensures that students who have earned a high school diploma or equivalency can access higher education, reflecting its Mission to foster lifelong learning, community engagement, and economic opportunity. TC3 supports student success through a wide range of services designed to enhance both academic performance and personal well-being.

Based on the previous Self-Study, the College initiated processes to strengthen academic advising, expand online orientation, and evaluate student satisfaction with the judicial process. For example, the College and the Faculty Association established clearly defined Advising Expectations (4.1), and the College began offering both registration and orientation online. Additionally, to improve the fairness and transparency of the student conduct process, Judicial Affairs moved from Residence Life to Student Affairs, with Residence Life addressing minor violations and conduct boards reviewing suspension-eligible cases to ensure broader consideration of each student's circumstances. Standard II provides additional discussion of these changes. Each of these steps represent examples of the College's ongoing improvements to support student success.

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

Criterion 1. Clearly stated, ethical policies, practices, and processes to recruit, admit, retain, and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with institutional mission.

Fundamental to the College's Mission is the belief that higher education should be accessible, inclusive, and transformative. The open admissions policy reflects this institutional commitment to access, inclusion, and opportunity for all learners, including recent high school graduates, adult learners, veterans, career changers, transfer, homeschooled, and international students. Grounded in equity and service to the

community, TC3 values student potential and provides personalized, student-centered support from inquiry through enrollment (4.2).

The College website has clearly stated admissions procedures, including any requirements for specific populations (4.3). The Panther Welcome Center (4.4) offers students a streamlined, one-stop hub to assist with admissions, registration, financial aid, career advising, and payment. By aligning services around student needs in a welcoming environment, the Panther Welcome Center supports clear, accessible pathways from inquiry through enrollment. By removing unnecessary barriers and clearly communicating requirements and processes, the College ensures that access to higher education is fair, inclusive, and responsive to community needs.

In Fall 2024, the College enrolled 1,641 core students (update), the majority of whom reside in Tompkins and Cortland counties. The student body reflects the College's commitment to access and opportunity, serving traditional-age students, adult learners, first-generation students, students with disabilities, veterans, and international students. With 87% of full-time, first-time students receiving financial aid, TC3 continues to advance affordability and equitable access in alignment with its mission (4.5).

To ensure ethical recruiting practices, admissions counselors engage in professional development to stay current on best practices in the field. Each counselor is a member of SUNY CAP (Council on Admissions Professionals) and NACAC (National Association for College Admission Counseling). Membership in these organizations demonstrates a commitment to advocacy and ethics in the field. Ethical recruiting at TC3 is not only about enrollment; it also reflects broader commitments to the community and student success.

The College ensures ethical marketing practices by providing clear, accurate, and accessible information about programs, policies, and student outcomes. The website lists all academic programs, including required courses, program expectations, and associated career and transfer pathways, enabling students to make informed decisions (4.6). The dedicated Student Hub section of the website provides students with handbook information, including policies, student rights and responsibilities, and available resources, as well providing access to their self-service account, the course catalog, student life activities, support services, and more (4.7). The College's investment in Slate, a customer relationship management platform, strengthens the institution's commitment to ethical, transparent, and student-centered communication. Slate enables the College to manage outreach through a secure, centralized system. In addition, Slate integrates marketing, communications, and recruitment efforts across every stage of the admissions cycle, ensuring coordinated, mission-aligned messaging from initial inquiry through enrollment (4.8).

Representatives from the Offices of Institutional Research, Enrollment Management, and Budget and Finance collaborate to complete annual enrollment projections using modeling based on admissions data, high school yields, county enrollment trends, and retention averages of cohorts. For the 2026-2027 academic year, enrollment projections are 998 new full-time students and 665 new part-time students (4.9). In addition, due to the new SUNY Reconnect Program targeting adult learners, based on current enrollment trends, students aged 25 and older are expected to represent the majority of TC3's core enrollment starting in Fall 2026 (4.10). To meet this demand, the College is establishing an Adult Learner Support Office, a centralized point of access designed to better serve post-traditional students, including SUNY Reconnect participants, evening and online learners, veterans, and students balancing education with work and caregiving responsibilities (4.11).

The Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) prioritizes retention, specifically improving Fall-to-Fall retention rates for first-time full-time and part-time cohorts (4.12). College efforts thus far have helped retention improve 11% from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024, increasing from 39.9% to 50.9% (4.13). While still below the 58% benchmarking average (4.14), the College is confident that by focusing on early momentum indicators and completion milestones, as laid out in Achieving the Dream and SUNY’s Academic Momentum metrics, progress will be made. These measures include data such as early credit accumulation, gateway course completion, and first-year persistence to identify potential barriers sooner in a student’s academic journey. While this framework is new, it reflects the College’s commitment to strengthening student success, from admittance to completion.

1a. Accurate and comprehensive information regarding expenses, financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans, repayment, and refunds;

The College recognizes that financial aid is a crucial element to accessing higher education. Financial aid counselors are available in the Panther Welcome Center to help students and their families understand financial aid eligibility requirements, application processes and procedures, and the types of aid available. The Center encourages completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), as well as New York State’s Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) for in-state students and informs students about scholarship opportunities.

To assist prospective and accepted students, the College website provides complete information regarding cost of attendance, including tuition and fees and a net price calculator (4.15). The tuition and fee schedule is approved annually by the Board of Trustees (4.16). The website also includes types of aid, as well as a direct link to FAFSA and TAP applications (4.17). The College’s tuition and required fees per FTE for 2024-2025 were \$6,970 for in-state students and \$12,855 for out-of-state students (4.18).

For the 2023-2024 academic year, 80% (vs. 73% IPEDS benchmark) of first-time full-time students received grants, loans, or scholarships. Of that cohort, 62% (55% benchmark) received Pell Grants and 45% (29% benchmark) received federal student loans. For the fall 2023 incoming cohort, TC3 students with federal loans took out more than students at other colleges, an average of \$5,906 vs \$5,345 (4.14). TC3’s average student indebtedness is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. TC3’s average student indebtedness for 2018-2022 and 2023-2024 (4.105)		
Metric	2018-2022	2023-2024
Avg Student Indebtedness	\$6193	\$6314
% Students w/ Loans	43%	43%
% Pell Grants	55%	54%
Avg Pell Grant	\$4553	\$4896

The College’s 2017 student loan cohort default rate was 21.3%. In response, the Financial Aid office strengthened counseling and resources, both in-person and online, to help students understand loan responsibilities, debt management, and that they do not have to take out the maximum loan amount available. Through these efforts, the student loan default rate dropped significantly to 16% in 2018, and 7.3% in 2019. Though still above the SUNY Community College average of 4.5% (4.19), the College expects

further improvements as processes are refined. The College is also engaging in the services of a debt collection agency to support outreach.

To assist students, financial aid counselors meet with both incoming and continuing students to complete aid applications, discuss all available financial aid options, and conduct mandatory loan counseling. The outreach has been effective. During the 2023-2024 academic year, the financial aid office recorded 1,537 appointments with students to discuss financial aid options. The FAFSA completion rate is 78.8% (4.20).

1b. A process by which students who are not adequately prepared for study at the level for which they have been admitted are identified, placed, and supported in attaining appropriate educational outcomes;

Student success advisors at the College use multiple measures to place students in their first semester courses. Advisors review criteria such as high school GPA; Regent exam scores for New York state students; standardized test scores, such as Accuplacer, SAT, ACT, and TASC; AP, CLEP, and/or IB scores; earned dual credits and other college credits; the English Background Survey; the Math Background Survey; and information disclosed by applicants during initial advisement. (4.21) (4.22) (2025 Math Placement Guidelines.pdf) (4.23) Some entering students may need to take an Accuplacer placement test, including students for whom English is not their native language and those seeking to place into a higher-level math course than what a transcript review indicates. To ensure accurate placement, English and math chairs work closely with Student Success to determine if revisions to the placement process are needed.

Based on this holistic assessment, some students may be placed into non-credit support courses in writing and/or math skills (4.24). Prior to the 2018 Self-Study, the College implemented a co-requisite model for English skills support (ENGL 098: Accelerated Writing Skills for ENGL 100) to replace the stand-alone developmental course approach to improve retention and on-time degree completion. Such an approach allows students immediate access to college-level material with extra support to address foundational skills gaps. From the Fall 2021 through Fall 2024, the average “C” pass rate for ENGL098 support courses was 62.26% (4.25). Building on the success of the English skills support course, in 2022, the Math department developed a co-requisite model for college-level math courses. At the same time, placement into co-requisite math courses shifted from placement tests, such as Accuplacer, to multiple measures. These efforts are key as success in both English and math is a focus of the College’s plan to meet the SUNY Academic Momentum metrics (4.26). As part of its commitment to student success and transparency, the College has regularly reported basic skills data through the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA), Post Secondary Data Partnership (PDP), and Annual Institutional Updates (AIU). Tables 3 and 4 show College Developmental Education enrollment and retention rates (4.25).

Table 3. Percentage of students in Developmental Education courses.				
Courses	2021-FALL	2022-FALL	2023-FALL	2024-FALL
ENGL098	23.87%	20.04%	19.84%	15.67%
MATH017	0.00%	3.70%	1.39%	2.87%
MATH020	0.00%	6.32%	9.72%	4.86%

Table 4. Fall to Spring Retention in Developmental Education Courses.					
Fall to Spring	2021-FALL	2022-FALL	2023-FALL	2024-FALL	Grand Total
ENGL098	100	92	100	71	363
No Longer Enrolled	31	28	24	25	108
Still Enrolled	67	62	74	46	249
Transferred	2	2	2		6
MATH017		17	7	13	37
No Longer Enrolled		7	3	3	13
Still Enrolled		10	4	10	24
MATH020		29	49	22	100
No Longer Enrolled		9	8	4	21
Still Enrolled		20	39	18	77
Transferred			2		2
Grand Total	100	120	138	97	455

1c: Orientation, advisement, and counseling programs to enhance retention and guide students throughout their educational experience;

Recognizing that TC3 students represent diverse backgrounds, including age, college preparedness, and language ability, and seek a wide range of degrees and certificates taught in multiple modalities, the College offers orientation, advisement, and counseling in a variety of ways to assist students once they have been accepted and to retain them once classes begin.

In June 2024, the College hired a new Vice President of Enrollment Management. One of the Vice President's first initiatives was to redesign the student onboarding process in response to operational challenges raised by a significant number of students not enrolling or not registering for classes until the very end of the summer. This late surge in registrations impacted staffing in areas such as Financial Aid, Student Accounts, and Access and Equity Services. It also affected the ability of the Office of Academic Affairs to assess course demand, add or remove sections from the schedule, or secure adjunct faculty. The onboarding system also provided challenges for students who were often confused by the required steps in the process.

Drawing on best practices, the Vice President collaborated with staff to redesign the onboarding process to provide early and structured registration opportunities that encourage incoming students for the Fall to register before August. This allowed more time for students to complete important requirements such as financial aid, Certificate of Residency, and immunizations and enabled Academic Affairs to better align course offerings with student demand. A central component of this redesign is Accepted Panther Day, the College's comprehensive and holistic onboarding program for accepted students (4.27). The Accepted Panther Day initiative was launched in Fall 2024 to support students beyond course registration by ensuring they are fully prepared for the transition to college. The initiative includes sessions to have students review their course schedules with an advisor, to familiarize students with essential technologies such as Self-Service, and to provide guidance on important topics like billing and financial aid (4.28). Before arriving at Accepted Panther Day, students receive a checklist to help them prepare for the day's activities (4.29). Several Accepted Panther Days are offered prior to each semester. Students who cannot attend in person can meet with a Student Success Advisor for a virtual onboarding appointment, after which they are sent instructions for their next steps (4.30). Overall feedback from students who attend Accepted Panther Day is positive and indicates that they found the session helpful (4.31).

The day before each semester begins is marked by New Student Orientation (NSO), a welcoming and inclusive program designed to introduce new and transfer students to the academic, social, and logistical aspects of college life (4.32). The Fall 2023 NSO hosted 364 students, representing 63% of invited new students, while Fall 2024 saw 325 students, representing 67% of those invited (4.33). Before attending NSO, students access online orientation modules, which also serve as the primary orientation for online-only students (4.34) (4.35). In response to student feedback (4.36), the College is launching an expanded online orientation for Fall 2026 that includes both new content and semester-long access for students. Supplementing NSO, the Global Initiatives Office hosts an International Student Orientation that includes topics such as maintaining compliance with student visa status and tips for navigating the American education system (4.37). During the first month of the semester, social events, like the Get Connected Fair, continue to help new students build relationships and integrate into campus life (4.38).

The College's approach to academic advising is built around the Guided Pathways model, a student-centered approach to streamline the path to degree completion by providing clear, structured educational experiences. Academic advising is contractually the work of teaching faculty and Student Success Advisors, both of whom are members of the Faculty Association. Faculty advisors carry a load of advisees based on the Faculty Association contract, and advisees are assigned based on faculty advisors' discipline (4.39). The Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Faculty Association clarified a set of advising expectations during the summer of 2022 (4.40), which the Provost's Office shares with faculty at the start of each semester (4.1). Recognizing the need for ongoing improvements to the advising model, the Associate Provost is leading a faculty working group to identify the key outcomes for faculty advisors and necessary supports, including training. In addition to academic advising, faculty advisors connect advisees with tutoring and counseling programs. Overall, students are pleased with their academic advising, rating it a 3.94/5 both in 2021 and in 2024 (4.41). Student Success Advisors work with new and transfer students to design their initial schedule around their needs, and the Global Initiatives Office provides dedicated advising to support students on F-1, F-2, and J-1 visas. For F-1 students, the College has a Primary Designated School Official (PDSO) and four Designated School Officials (DSOs), and for J-1s students, it has one Responsible Officer (RO) and two Alternate Responsible Officers (AROs).

Following a comprehensive review of student support services in Fall 2024 and Spring 2025, meetings with Student Success Advisors revealed that their structure was inadvertently limiting proactive engagement with students at academic risk. For example, analysis showed that the Academic Recovery Program was generally reactive, relying on one-time interventions tied to registration holds, without consistent follow-up or progress tracking (2026000_s4_recovery.pdf). This prompted a redesign of Student Success Advising to a more intentional, semester-based approach. Further review identified structural misalignment in the Student Success Advisor model, including advisor caseloads below national norms and NACADA benchmarks, inconsistent assignment of non-matriculated students, and limited opportunities for sustained relationship-building. In response to this, the College identified Success Coaching as a strategic priority designed to complement faculty advising by providing proactive, relationship-based support to at-risk students. Building on existing advising and coaching practices and in response to persistently low fall-to-fall retention rates, the College launched a pilot Success Coaching program in Fall 2025 for first-time, at-risk students, which incorporated structured training and tracking to monitor student engagement and progress. The review also prompted enhancements to advising practices, including earlier assignment of faculty advisors and the development of academic profile sheets (4.42) to support more personalized,

informed advising. Strengthening advising expectations, training, and alignment between faculty advisors and Student Success staff remains a priority within both the College Strategic Plan and the Strategic Enrollment Plan, with the planned expansion of Success Coaching informed by proven models such as SUNY ASAP and Educational Opportunity Program, as the program continues to evolve through ongoing assessment to improve persistence, coordination, and overall student success outcomes.

Furthering the College’s commitment to building and maintaining a caring and equitable campus, Health and Wellness Services (HWS) offers a variety of services to encourage individual and community well-being. HWS works with students to address life challenges that could hinder academic success, including mental health, physical health, food insecurity, and alcohol and substance abuse recovery. In 2024, the College ranked in the top 3 among peer colleges for reported student satisfaction with mental health counseling, student health services, and programming regarding alcohol and substance abuse (4.41). These services reflect an integrated approach to supporting students’ academic, personal, and basic needs (Table 5).

Table 5. Summary of Health and Wellness Services	
Service	Description
Mental Health Counseling	Led by a clinical counselor and case manager, this service provides campus-based counseling and coordinates referrals for students requiring higher levels of care. The office manages more than 400 appointments each semester. (4.106)
Health Center	Coordinated by a full-time registered nurse, the Health Center provides care for acute illnesses, personal wellness needs, emergency contraception, over-the-counter medications, and flu/COVID vaccinations. (4.107)
Panther Pantry and Community Closet	Offers no-cost food, household supplies, and donated clothing to members of the campus community. (4.108) Since June 2021, more than 1,500 students have accessed the Pantry. (4.99)
Recovery Program	Supports students and community members in recovery from substance use or impacted by another’s substance use. The Recovery Space provides programming, community-building activities, coffee, and snacks to foster connection and support. (4.109)
Best Life Lounge	A dedicated space for students to relax, recharge, and build community. Programming includes mental health awareness, Title IX education, registration guidance, food insecurity awareness, and related topics. (4.110)
LGBTQIA+ Student Support Specialist	Established in January 2025, this role provides advocacy, inclusion-focused programming, and individualized support to promote the well-being and academic success of LGBTQIA+ students, with particular attention to trans and queer students (4.111)

The College’s Campus Advocacy, Referral, and Education (CARE) Team (4.43) promotes student success and well-being by serving as a central resource for identifying and responding to concerns about a student’s health, behavior, or overall safety. The CARE Team brings together staff from offices like Campus Police, Student Conduct, Health and Wellness Services, and Access and Equity to assess situations, coordinate appropriate support, and connect students to campus and community resources. Members work collaboratively on early intervention when students are facing challenges that could impact their academic progress or personal well-being, ensuring timely support and follow-up to help students thrive in college. During the 2024-2025 academic year, 71 students benefited from CARE Team resources (4.44).

Compared to peers, the College heavily invests in academic support and student services (Figure 2).

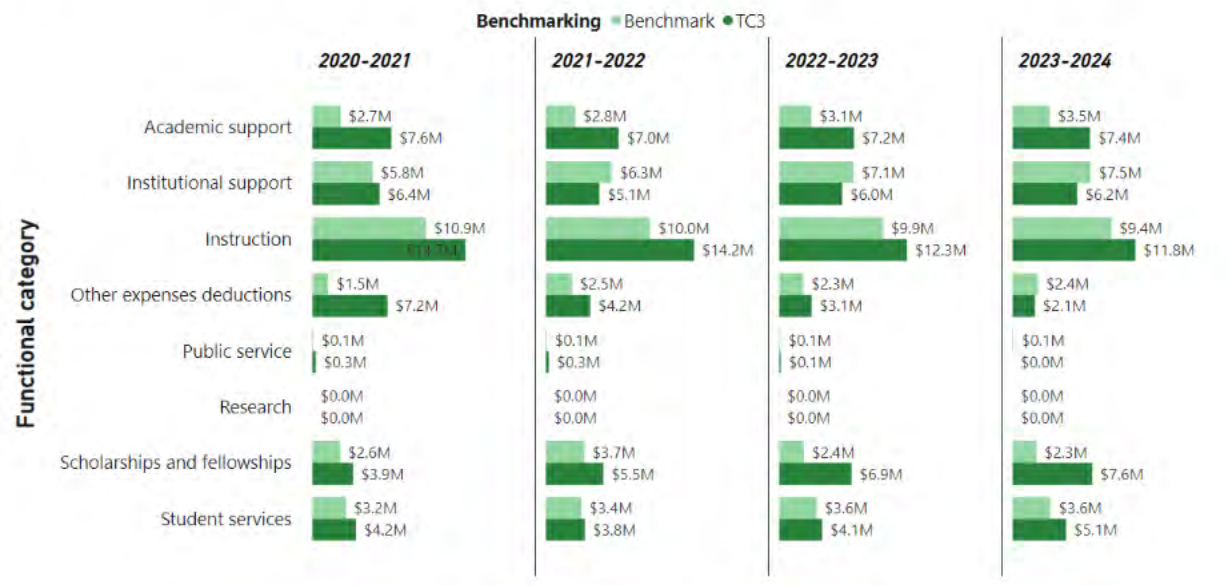


Figure 2: Core expenses by functional category compared to peers (source: IPEDS).

1d. Processes designed to enhance student achievement including certificate and degree completion, transfer to other institutions, and post-completion placement;

Academic advising plays a critical role in supporting students' academic progress. Faculty advisors meet with their advisees throughout the year to select courses, discuss academic progress, and answer questions about future studies and career pathways.

To complement faculty academic advising, in Fall 2025, the College adapted its existing Student Success approach, where each advisor was a generalist supporting students on a walk-in basis or after alerts were raised, to a "Success Coaching" model (4.45);(4.46). This fits within the College's broader student success and retention strategy by proactively supporting the whole student in developing skills in time management, self-direction, goal-setting, and effective use of campus resources. Students are matched with Success Coaches using multiple risk indicators, such as high school average below 80, first-generation college students, and first-time adult learners. These Success Coaches serve a role similar to the advisors for the College's "opportunity" programs, such as the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) and SUNY Advancing Success in Associate Pathways (ASAP). As such, all were provided with extensive Success Coaching training to support implementation.

Through EOP, the College supports students who demonstrate academic promise and face significant economic barriers to higher education. EOP provides a range of holistic services designed to promote student success, including a Summer Bridge program to prepare students for their first college semester, dedicated tutoring hours, and a quiet study space (4.47). Since the program began in Fall 2022, the number of students has continued to grow, with 35 students in the Spring 2025 cohort (4.48) (2026000_s4_EOPSuccessMetrics.pdf). To support students who are low-income, but above the EOP threshold, the College joined SUNY's first cohort of ASAP participants in 2025. ASAP is a comprehensive support system to help students graduate on time. The initial cohort of 150 students started at TC3 in the Fall 2025 semester (4.49); (2026000_s4_ASAPSuccessMetrics.pdf). Through Student Success Coaching, EOP,

and ASAP, approximately two-thirds (313 of 472) of new first-time students in Fall 2025 received enhanced, personalized support in addition to that provided by their faculty advisors (4.50). In Spring 2025, EOP, ASAP, and Global Initiatives (for international students) co-located in an Opportunity Programs suite to help raise the profile of support services and support community building.

The Baker Center for Learning (BCL) provides students with free tutoring services for a variety of subjects, including English, Math, and Science, provided by both paraprofessional and student tutors and both in-person and live remote formats. The Tutoring Center has been nationally recognized for quality by receiving the College Reading and Learning Association Level 3 certification, the highest level of certification, based upon standards for tutor selection, training, service, and evaluation (4.52). Despite this quality, use of the Tutoring Center is low, falling from 24% of TC3 students meeting with a tutor in Fall 2024 to 15% of students using the Tutoring Center in Spring 2025 (4.51). This led to a review by the Provost of reasons for low engagement; in conjunction with the Director of Tutoring Services, Faculty, and the Student Government Association, the Provost developed a proposal to increase utilization without increasing costs. This proposal, due for implementation in Fall 2026, focuses on pairing professional tutors with specific courses, based on modality and drop/failure/withdrawal rates (2026000_s4_tutor_plan.pdf).

The College's Office of Access and Equity Services provides support and resources for students with disabilities, working to remove barriers and to create an inclusive learning environment. Beginning in Fall 2023, as part of a broader institutional commitment to accessibility, TC3 adopted the social justice model of disability, a self-reporting approach for accommodations to promote equity and inclusion for all students (4.53). The self-reporting process empowers students to advocate for their needs without expensive medical documentation, fostering autonomy, and reducing barriers to access. Since implementing this model, the number of students receiving academic accommodation has increased (4.54). During the onboarding process, all students are asked via a Slate form if they have a disability and are interested in learning about disability-related services; by requiring all students to complete the form, TC3 decreases stigma and lessens the chance of a student not receiving needed accommodations.

The Committee on Academic Status (COAS) supports the student experience by reviewing and making recommendations for policy and procedure changes related to academic standards. Recent recommendations included removing the Administrative Withdrawal for students who had missed two weeks of classes and instituting an official policy for Incompletes (4.55). COAS has traditionally played a role in supporting students facing academic suspension, though this role is being reviewed in conjunction with the Success Coaching model to ensure a more proactive approach.

As a community college, supporting students in their transfer goals (4.56) continues to be a priority. The College hosts a fall College Fair with over 50 four-year colleges in attendance, and a spring Transfer Week featuring panel discussions with TC3 alumni, workshops, and a transfer college fair (4.57). As many students intend to transfer to SUNY Cortland, a Transfer Advisor from SUNY Cortland is on campus weekly to assist students. In addition to working with faculty advisors, students can meet with a Student Success Advisor to discuss general transfer options. In Spring 2025, the College partnered with the Aspen Institute for a full-day workshop to reimagine its approach to transfer, including prioritizing new articulation and dual admissions agreements (4.58).

The College cultivates a campus-wide culture of career readiness by providing comprehensive career exploration, job/internship preparation, and essential skill development (4.56). In a 2024 SUNY Satisfaction

Survey, TC3 ranked 5th among peers in both career planning services and availability of internships (4.41). Students can receive individualized advising from a Senior Student Success Advisor for career exploration and assessments, résumé and interview preparation, and job or internship searches. A variety of online tools, further support career research (Career Connections modules in LMS), degree alignment (CareerCoach), and access to job and internship opportunities (Handshake). The cross-departmental Career Team offers workshops, classroom presentations, networking events, and regional job fairs, and administers the TC3 Internship Fund, which awards \$36,000 annually to support students in unpaid or low-paid applied learning experiences (4.59). Through these efforts, students are prepared to enter the workforce or transfer with a strong foundation for continued career development. TC3 students who choose to enter the workforce upon degree completion have multiple opportunities to connect with employers on campus, and many find jobs at local employers (4.59);(4.60).

The College's completion rates by program can be found in the IPEDS Completion Data (4.61). The Nursing A.A.S. program has the highest completion rate, averaging 77.4% from 2019-2023, with the Business Administration A.S. as the next highest at 41% (4.62). One reason for the large difference is that the Nursing program has selective admissions, with both GPA and prerequisite course requirements for entry.

1e. Processes to disaggregate and analyze student achievement data to inform and implement strategies that improve outcomes for all student populations;

The College's Fall 2024 student profile (that includes all core student types) shows that more than half of the student population is female. Most of the student population consists of students who identify as white, with smaller numbers identifying as Hispanic/Latino, Black or African American, and Asian. The College's student population has remained generally consistent over the last four years, with a slight increase in the number of Hispanic/Latino students in the 2024-2025 Academic Year (Table 6). The number of Nonresident Aliens (International Students) fluctuates based on the U.S. policies, such as those related to obtaining student visas (4.63).

Table 6. Student count and percentages disaggregated by relevant demographic populations (4.112)											
	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25		
Has Pell											
No	834	(49.8%)	751	(49.7%)	773	(50.5%)	870	(52.6%)	776	(47.3%)	
Yes	840	(50.2%)	760	(50.3%)	757	(49.5%)	785	(47.4%)	865	(52.7)	
Ethnicity											
Amer Indian/Alaska Native	4	(0.2%)	5	(0.3%)	3	(0.2%)	2	(0.1%)	6	(0.4%)	
Asian	42	(2.5%)	34	(2.3%)	33	(2.2%)	45	(2.7%)	45	(2.7%)	
Black or African American	193	(11.5%)	120	(7.9%)	146	(9.5%)	140	(8.5%)	154	(9.4%)	
Hispanic	181	(10.8%)	188	(12.4%)	194	(12.7%)	192	(11.6%)	222	(13.5%)	
Nat Hawaiian/Pacific Island.	2	(0.1%)	2	(0.1%)	2	(0.1%)	2	(0.1%)	4	(0.2%)	
Nonresident Alien	15	(0.9%)	21	(1.4%)	44	(2.9%)	100	(6.0%)	57	(3.5%)	
Two or More	96	(5.7%)	94	(6.2%)	94	(6.1%)	86	(5.2%)	99	(6.0%)	
Undeclared	48	(2.9%)	34	(2.3%)	21	(1.4%)	11	(0.7%)	33	(2.0%)	
White	1093	(65.3%)	1013	(67.0%)	993	(64.9%)	1077	(65.1%)	1021	(62.2%)	
Age Breakdown											

≤24	1053	(62.9%)	886	(58.6%)	954	(62.4%)	1030	(62.2%)	987	(60.1%)
≥25	621	(37.1%)	625	(41.4%)	576	(37.6%)	625	(37.8%)	654	(39.9%)

In the SUNY Academic Momentum plan, SUNY and the College identified two populations of first-time full-time students on which to focus due to lagging retention and graduation rates: 1) Pell-recipients and 2) students of color (Table 7). Through the Strategic Plan (goal 4.1) and with the support of Achieving the Dream, multiple departments (e.g. advising, admissions, faculty) are collaborating to close the gap. The College has also invested in resources to support disaggregated data analysis and assessment, under the guidance of the Institutional Effectiveness Division.

Table 7. First-time full-time student populations and success rates (4.26)			
Category	100% Grad (Fall 2022)	150% Grad (Fall 2022)	Retention (Fall 2024)
Pell	35/206 (16.9%)	58/206 (28.2%)	107/219 (48.9%)
Non-Pell	44/164 (26.8%)	55/164 (33.5%)	67/121 (55.4%)
Male	41/206 (16.6%)	55/206 (35.4%)	86/164 (52.4%)
Female	38/164 (22.7%)	58/164 (26.7%)	87/175 (49.7%)
POC	19/145 (13.1%)	31/145 (21.4%)	69/146 (47.9%)
White	60/225 (26.7%)	82/225 (36.4%)	105/194 (54.1%)

Criterion 2. Fair and transparent policies and procedures regarding evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits, credits awarded through experiential learning, prior non-academic learning, competency-based assessment, and other alternative learning approaches;

To assist prospective transfer students, the College website offers several resources regarding the transfer of credit, including the transfer credit policy (4.64) and Credit for Prior Learning (4.65). Transfer courses are evaluated by the Registrar on an individual basis with credits for all courses passed with a letter grade of C or higher at regionally accredited institutions and recorded on official transcripts evaluated and accepted if they apply to specific TC3 degree or certificate requirements. College-level courses completed outside the United States also are considered for transfer credit if they are listed on official transcripts and the originating institution is accredited by the country's Ministry of Education.

The College also uses a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) process to determine if a student has already mastered skills and knowledge through prior learning experiences that are equivalent to college-level credit (4.66). A student may receive credit for such prior learning based on a portfolio evaluation by faculty, standardized exams (such as AP or CLEP), career and technical licensure and training, and Military American Council on Education (ACE) guidelines. The Board of Trustees' Policy for Prior Learning Assessment affirms the College's authorization to evaluate prior learning per SUNY guidelines (4.67). Ultimately, credit awards are at the discretion of the Provost's Office, in consultation with appropriate faculty and staff. This process aims to support adult learners, reduce costs, accelerate degree completion, and align with TC3's goal of increasing upward mobility for non-traditional students.

Information regarding the Transfer of Credit policy (4.70) is available on the College website. Students may also transfer credits to TC3 through SUNY's seamless transfer credit policies. The College has a thorough

process for awarding credit, individually reviewing each course for applicability to the TC3 degree program. This is an area where the College hopes to identify efficiencies through the incorporation of digital tools, perhaps within its existing Parchment transcription services. From Fall 2021 to Spring 2025, the College awarded transfer credit to 1,384 incoming students, for a total of 30,951 credits. These transfer credits were mostly traditional credit hours from other colleges and universities, but they also included College Board AP credits (459), College Board CLEP credits (63), and Military ACE credits (28) (4.68). IPEDS data show that the College's total number of new transfer students has remained steady the last few years, with Fall 2024 enrollment reporting a total of 194 new transfer students (4.69).

TC3 supports seamless transfer as a central component of its commitment to student success. Per SUNY transfer policies (4.71), TC3 students who have completed their A.S. or A.A. degree are guaranteed acceptance at a SUNY four-year institution with junior standing in their degree guaranteed if they transfer to a parallel program. College faculty have designed all A.S. and A.A. programs to meet relevant SUNY Transfer Path requirements to maximize credit acceptance. Students can use the College's transfer webpage to look up SUNY transfer institutions and transfer course equivalencies, The College also maintains numerous articulation agreements (4.70) with transfer institutions, including Cornell University (4.72) and Upstate Medical University (4.73), to ensure clear academic pathways and minimize credit loss. In the last two years, the College has signed fourteen articulation agreements in a variety of programs (4.74). These agreements align course work between TC3 and the transfer partner to provide students with structured transfer plans that promote timely completion. Some agreements include transfer scholarships to help TC3 students complete their baccalaureate (2026000_s4_IC_transfer_agreement.pdf). Through coordinated advising and established institutional partnerships, the College strengthens transfer outcomes and ensures that students are well prepared to continue their education efficiently and successfully.

In addition to these resources, faculty advisors offer general advising for advisees looking to transfer and provide advice for their specific disciplines while Student Success Advisors are trained to work with both incoming and outgoing transfer students (4.75)

Criterion 3. Maintenance of Student Information and Records: Policy and procedures for the safe and secure maintenance and appropriate release of student information and records

The College's Student Rights and Responsibilities webpage (4.76) offers students information regarding privacy and data issues, such as FERPA, Computer Resource Use Protocols, and student email accounts. Students who wish to have additional privacy may complete the Directory Information Withholding Release form to prevent identifying information from appearing in any College publications or FOIL requests (4.77).

The Information Security Protocol (4.78) ensures the safety and security of personal information, protects against anticipated security threats, guards against unauthorized access, and complies with all applicable regulations. The College contracts with a Virtual Chief Information Security Officer (vCISO) to support campus technology staff with cybersecurity strategy and risk management to safeguard student and employee data (2026000_s4_vCISO_contract.pdf). In addition, the Board of Trustee Policy for Computer and Information Security ensures that the College stays compliant with federal regulations (4.79). The Board also maintains a policy regarding the schedule for retention and disposition of records (4.80).

The College maintains a secure online student identity verification protocol for distance education (4.81), requiring students to access courses through the College's LMS using unique, college-assigned credentials tied to official enrollment records. Before an online student receives their credentials and student ID card, they must verify their identity by supplying government-issued photo identification and other unique personal identifiers. This process supports academic integrity, protects student privacy in compliance with FERPA, and ensures transparency regarding identity verification practices, reflecting the College's commitment to ethical operations and quality assurance in online learning.

Criterion 4. If offered, athletic, student life, and other extracurricular activities that are regulated by the same academic, fiscal, and administrative principles and procedures that govern all other programs

Student fees are assessed to support the provision of extracurricular activities, such as athletics, recreation, and student organizations, as well as the health and wellness services described earlier in the chapter. For those students who need it, childcare and residence life services are also available on fee-basis. The amount and use of these fees are overseen by the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and the Faculty Student Association (FSA), whose Board includes students, faculty, and leadership from each department in Student Affairs. The College's Board of Trustees authorized the FSA to provide these services for the mutual benefit of the College and students (<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/board-policies/b9-faculty-student-association>).

Athletics and Recreation

The College offers students access to a fitness center, swimming pool, recreation facilities, intramural sports, and intercollegiate athletics in baseball, softball, volleyball, cross-country, men's lacrosse, and men's and women's basketball, golf, and soccer (4.82). In 2024-2025, 79 men and 38 women participated in intercollegiate athletics (4.83). A Captains Council consisting of student representatives informs athletic and recreation services and promotion within the campus community.

The Athletics & Recreation Mission Statement (4.84) highlights team building, sportsmanship, diversity of people and perspectives, and building better citizens. Intercollegiate athletics values mirror those of the College with a focus on life-long learning, excellence in teaching from the coaching staff, and assisting student athletes in continued success beyond their TC3 experience.

Athletics branding and revenue (to supplement student fees) occurs through social media, external promotions such as banners, sponsorship of events, community programs, and sales of clothing promoting the Panther brand, which adheres to College Branding and Marketing Guidelines (<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/branding>).

All College athletic standards and conduct policies comply with NJCAA standards (4.85), which includes maintaining a GPA of 2.0 or higher to play on an intercollegiate team. The Athletic Director keeps a record of Team GPA (Table 8); the team GPA includes all students who started the semester eligible for the team, meaning that the team GPA may fall below 2.0 if some players lose GPA eligibility during the semester. In 2023-2024, 15 TC3 student athletes were honored for academic excellence by the NJCAA with Men's Golf and Women's Soccer named as Academic Teams of the Year for having team GPAs of at least 3.0 (4.86).

Table 8. Team GPA by sport (4.113)					
TEAM	Year End 2021	Year End 2022	Year End 2023	Year End 2024	Honors
Golf	2.8	N/A	3.11	3.51	All NJCAA Academic Team
Women's Soccer	N/A	N/A	2.81	3.17	All NJCAA Academic Team
Baseball	2.16	2.32	2.65	2.69	
Softball	N/A	1.92	2.93	2.69	
Men's Lacrosse	1.83	1.89	2.42	2.54	
Men's Basketball	N/A	2.32	2.6	2.25	
Men's Soccer	2.98	2.73	2.55	2.15	
Women's Basketball	N/A	2.69	3.33	1.76	
Cross Country	3.14	N/A	2.84	N/A	
Volleyball	N/A	2.2	2.2	N/A	

Student Clubs and Organizations

There are more than 20 student clubs and organizations at the College (4.87), all of which adhere to all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations governing student organizations and their activities. The Office of Student Activities' Club and Organization Handbook outlines all responsibilities, policies, benefits and privileges, parameters, and guidelines for student clubs (4.88). The Office of Student Activities is central in creating a caring and engaged campus community and uses the National Association of Colleges and Employees (NACE) competencies to inform program design assessment. Flagship events include online and on-campus new student orientation, engagement events during the first month of each semester, and leadership activities for students (4.89). Student participation and achievements outside the classroom are recorded on each student's Co-Curricular Transcript (CCT) (4.90). As of March 2026, students have earned over 2,562 badges, which can be used for résumé building, interview talking points, and can be added to a LinkedIn profile (4.91);(4.92).

Residence Life

TC3 is a residential as well as a commuter campus. In 2025-2026, more than 275 students lived on campus. Student Resident Assistants plan programming around community-building and social interaction, including game nights, craft nights, and video game tournaments. The professional staff (Hall Directors and Staff-in-Residence) organize educational programming on belonging and inclusivity and other life-skills needs such as communication skills, harm reduction, and self-care (4.93). Residence Life provides a student handbook to educate students on the expectations of living in a community on campus, pertinent safety issues, and applicable policies and procedures (4.94).

Criterion 5. If applicable, adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval student support services designed, delivered, or assessed by third party providers

The College contracts with American Dining Creations for all food service on campus (4.95). The contract, which outlines the right and responsibilities of American Dining Creations and the College, took effect in August 2009. The current contract, renegotiated to reflect post-pandemic occupancy declines, took effect

August 31, 2023. Exhibit 7 of the contract identifies KPIs of Operational Performance which include administering an internal student satisfaction survey and monitoring student comments and ratings. For example, in response to internal surveys indicating students wanted more information about menu options, American Dining Creation's TC3 webpage added nutritional information, warnings about potential allergens, and recipes (4.98). To ensure that dining services meet student needs, the FSA formed a Student Food Advisory Committee to provide regular feedback from students to American Dining.

Criterion 6. Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of student support services for all student populations with appropriate metrics and evaluation

The College uses the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS Standards) as the quality benchmark for Student Affairs programming. CAS Standards provide professional criteria for higher education programs and services that promote assessment, improvement, and the quality of student learning and development. In addition to tracking usage of support services and participation in activities, Student Affairs offices utilize both internal surveys and the SUNY Student Satisfaction survey to assess the quality of student support services. Each Student Affairs department reports on goals and assessments to the FSA and the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Services provided through the Office of Enrollment Management are also assessed through the SEP. Periodically, the VP of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs conducts more in-depth reviews to identify needs in conjunction with SEP and strategic Planning goals.

Health and Wellness Services (HWS) annually assesses student use, program efficacy, and campus health and wellness needs with multiple strategies and tools. HWS captures program and service utilization and impact with electronic student sign-ins, student satisfaction surveys, and student focus groups. Mental health counseling, case management, and individual support are recorded in the electronic medical record. From 2021 to 2024, HWS saw a positive mean change in student satisfaction rates for mental health/counseling services (0.05 increase), student health services unrelated to mental health/counseling services (0.01 increase), education programs regarding alcohol and substance abuse (0.13 increase), and general health and wellness programs (0.04 increase) (4.41). HWS also administers the ACHA National College Health Assessment every other spring to learn more about TC3 students' health and wellness knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors to inform health promotion efforts.

Use of the Panther Pantry and Community Closet is captured in software of the Food Bank of the Southern Tier, the College's partner agency in providing these services. From June 2021 until December 2024, the Panther Pantry and Community Closet had 11,231 total visits, of which 1,686 were distinct visitors (4.99).

Student Activities sets and assesses clearly defined goals for each academic year. This assessment is ongoing and used to inform activities both immediately and in the future. Program attendance is captured through sign-ups on Campus Groups and program check-in information. Student Activities establishes goals prior to events and uses post-event student satisfaction surveys and after-action assessment to assess those goals. Priority updates include the average attendance at student events, increasing student club membership, and increasing attendance and engagement at onboarding activities such as New Student Orientation and Welcome Week (4.100). The Director of Student Activities submits an annual report (4.101) which includes goals, KPIs, and outcomes showing alignment to CAS Standards and Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs priorities. In 2022, the College received a three-year Special Populations

Grant from the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) for Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) prevention services for LGBTQIA+ youth and young adults in Cortland and Tompkins Counties (4.102). Through surveys and engagement tracking in outreach efforts supported by the grant, it was determined that LGBTQIA+ individuals faced higher unmet needs for AOD prevention due to stigma, limited culturally competent care, and lack of affirming support. There was a positive response to the peer-led, community-based interventions the College initiated through the grant. Based on these findings, HWS added a Student Support Specialist in January of 2025 with fiscal support from SUNY.

In 2025, the Enrollment Management and Student Affairs divisions conducted a comprehensive six-month review of student services to ensure they remain impactful, responsible, and sustainable (4.103). The Student Affairs Leadership Team (SALT) was actively engaged throughout this process, examining service data and participating in collaborative, design-focused charrettes to explore how structures and resources could better align with today's student needs, a review of which highlighted the necessity of Student Services Fee (SSF) Allocation Guidelines. These guidelines, developed in collaboration with the Executive Council and subsequently approved by the FSA Board, prioritize student-centered use, aligns services with changing student demographics, and ensures long-term fiscal responsibility through transparency. Importantly, the guidelines increase the percentage of fee dollars dedicated to student-directed engagement. The student voice was essential throughout this process, and SALT gathered student input through representative groups like the SGA and direct feedback to inform its understanding of student priorities. Moving forward, the College is committed to providing continued transparency and education regarding how SSF resources are allocated to support student success, including through an all-campus email and presentations to the President's Cabinet and College Senate to continue campus-wide engagement and discussion.

An evaluation of the Enrollment Services Center's operations revealed that a fragmented reporting structure was contributing to inconsistent student service. Although Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Success, and Billing were physically co-located and collectively responsible for critical front-facing and administrative functions, the absence of a centralized communication and triage model resulted in disjointed student interactions. In response to staff concerns and a formal assessment in Summer 2024, interviews revealed that a One-Stop model had been previously envisioned but never fully implemented. As a result, the College President approved a restructuring that aligned most functions under the new Enrollment Management and Student Affairs division, while retaining Billing under Finance, in the form of a best-practice Student Accounts (Bursar) Office. This transition was supported by a new Dean of Enrollment Operations and Welcome Center Services position, charged with leading the development of the Panther Welcome Center and improving student onboarding in partnership with senior leadership. Through collaborative planning, staff reassignment, cross-training expectations, and exposure to a successful One-Stop model at a peer community college, the College implemented a new operational structure, launching both the Panther Welcome Center and Student Accounts Office in Spring 2025. With clarified leadership, improved alignment across functions, and the creation of a Bursar position to ensure continuity in financial operations, early feedback reflects improved role clarity and coordination, with ongoing training and refinement continuing as the model evolves to enhance student service, efficiency, and cross-functional collaboration.

Building upon the Success Coaching model, in Summer 2026, the College is launching an Adult Learner Support Office, a centralized point of access designed to better serve post-traditional students, including SUNY Reconnect participants, evening and online learners, veterans, and students balancing education with

work and caregiving responsibilities. This office, which aligns with the SEP and Strategic Plan, will emphasize structured outreach, coordinated referrals, and clear points of connection for students, while supporting adult learners through coordinated coaching and navigation in partnership with their faculty academic advisors. Notably, this initiative positions TC3 among the first SUNY community colleges to establish a dedicated structure specifically supporting SUNY Reconnect students and reinforces the College's commitment to adult learner access and success (4.104).

ALIGNMENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

Table 9. Standard-to-Institutional Priority Alignment			
Standard / Criterion	Institutional Priority	Alignment Narrative	Representative Evidence
Standard 4 - Criterion 1	Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility	Through coordinated onboarding, advising, academic support services, and the use of milestone and early momentum metrics, TC3 implements structured processes that support persistence, completion, and successful transfer or career placement. Initiatives such as Guided Pathways, Success Coaching, EOP, ASAP, and other targeted student support programs help identify student needs early and align institutional resources to improve academic progress and upward mobility.	Corequisite model success Success of EOP & ASAP students Increased students with accommodations Increased retention rate
Standard 4 - Criterion 1	Create a caring, equitable, and engaged campus community	TC3's comprehensive advising, counseling, health and wellness services, and equity-focused support programs foster a campus environment that prioritizes student well-being and belonging. By intentionally designing services that respond to the diverse needs and experiences of its student population, the College promotes an inclusive and supportive learning community.	Accepted Panther Day Student orientation Health and Wellness services and visits Campus Climate Survey
Standard 4 - Criterion 2	Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility	TC3 maintains clear and transparent policies for evaluating and accepting transfer credits and prior learning, ensuring that students receive appropriate recognition for previous academic and experiential learning. Through articulation agreements and established transfer pathways with partner institutions, the College supports efficient credit mobility and facilitates students' continued educational advancement.	New articulation agreements Prior Learning Assessment and Transfer Credit policies
Standard 4 - Criterion 4	Create a caring, equitable, and engaged campus community	Student Life activities contribute to a vibrant campus environment that promotes connection, leadership development, and student engagement. By operating within the same institutional policies and oversight structures as academic programs, these opportunities support holistic student development and strengthen a sense of belonging within the campus community.	Co-Curricular Transcript FSA Board, Captains Council, and Student Food Advisory Committee
Standard 4 - Criterion 6	Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility	TC3 regularly assesses the effectiveness of student support services through institutional and departmental data analysis, early momentum indicators, and strategic planning initiatives coordinated with Institutional Effectiveness. These assessments inform continuous improvements in advising, academic support, and student	SUNY Academic Momentum KPI's CAS Standards Report

		success programming to strengthen retention, completion, and transfer outcomes.	
Standard 4 - Criterion 6	Create a caring, equitable, and engaged campus community	Assessment processes also examine student engagement and access to services across diverse student populations to ensure equitable support and participation. Findings guide the enhancement of programs and resources that promote student well-being, engagement, and a supportive campus climate.	Campus Climate Survey Adult Learner Support Office

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The College is committed to supporting students from initial inquiry and application through graduation by offering a breadth of support services, such as orientations, academic advising, tutoring services, mental health counseling, career service, and more. The comprehensive support system reflects deep commitment to the institutional priorities of advancing student outcomes and creating a caring community. As reflected in the Mission, Vision, and Values, TC3 strives to empower a diverse student population through accessible, high-quality education supporting student success, equity, and lifelong learning. By fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, the College helps students achieve their academic and professional aspirations.

Strengths:

- Targeted resources for specific populations, including an Adult Student Recruiter and a Student Support Specialist to support LGBTQ+ students
- Access and Equity's social justice model incorporates students' lived experience, expanding equitable access to those who may lack recent formal documentation of disability
- Multiple spaces and services for engagement, building a sense of belonging, and addressing student needs, including student clubs, athletics, mental health services, pantry, Best Life Lounge, Recovery Space, Opportunity programs and Adult Learner office/lounges, leadership opportunities, and co-curricular transcripts

Areas for Improvement:

- Utilization of academic support and student services is uneven and data on the correlation between these services and student success is incomplete.
- While teaching faculty have access to myriad advising resources, in the form of documentation, online tools, and professional development, there is a lack of common training on the key knowledge and skills all faculty advisors should possess.

Recommendations:

- Implement a coordinated student development model to increase awareness, access, and utilization of academic and student support services with clearly defined participation benchmarks, reviewed annually to ensure that support services are equitably accessed and demonstrably contributing to improved retention, persistence, and student success outcomes.
- In collaboration with faculty and student success advisors, develop required faculty advising training that is aligned with work of Student Success Advisors, and best practices in transfer and career support.

STANDARD V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

Table 1. Standard 5 alignment with institutional priorities and strategic directions	
Category	Alignment
Primary Institutional Priorities Addressed	• Cultivate excellence in teaching, learning, and academic programs • Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility
Strategic Directions Aligned	• Innovation & Excellence
Focus of the Standard	Assessment of student learning outcomes, use of evidence to improve teaching and learning, and evaluation of assessment processes

INTRODUCTION

One of the areas of great intentional improvement and institution-wide collaboration can be found in TC3's approach to academic assessment. Since 2019, the College has refined the academic assessment process, resulting in a steady increase in assessment participation. To address suggestions provided in response to last Self-Study, the College made several important improvements to academic assessment, including the creation and approval of the Academic Assessment Committee (5.1), the Curriculum Committee issuing a new template for master course syllabi (MCS) that included SLOs (5.2), the requirement that department chairs review individual section syllabi for MCS compliance, the establishment of an updated program assessment cycle for department chairs with more data support (5.3), the purchase of Power BI to connect the Provost Office and department chairs to real time data, and the 2019 initiation (5.4) and 2025 renewal (5.5) of an Academic Primary Plan cycle. These improvements reinforce several of TC3's institutional priorities (Table 5.1). Supporting the institutional priority of academic excellence, the alignment of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) with Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) and Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) ensures that assessment efforts are directed and collaborative across the College's academic communities. In addition, by codifying an assessment cycle and process, the College has created several ways to review its efforts, collaborate on revisions to MCS and PLOs, and institute effective, data-informed improvement. When considering the institutional priority for successful student outcomes, the College's revitalized approach to connecting its ILO/PLO/SLO assessment to the "big picture" analysis found in its Department Assessment Reports, Academic Program Reviews, and Strategic Plan reveals the intentionality of assessment in support of graduation, transfer, and career.

The College has a representative Academic Assessment Committee that collaborates with the Provost Office, teaching faculty, and the Curriculum Committee to oversee the creation of SLOs and PLOs rather than just reviewing the results of assessment. The interconnectivity of these outcomes is reinforced yearly through a guiding Schedule of Assessment Activities calendar (5.3) and through successful reporting on assessment activity at a variety of levels, including by instructors, department chairs, the Assessment Committee Chair and members, and the Provost's Office. In addition, the College has established a 5-year rotating schedule (5.6) for the review of all academic programs, SUNY General Education courses, and ILOs.

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

Criterion 1. Clearly stated student learning outcomes at the institution and degree/program levels, which are interrelated with one another, with relevant educational experiences, and with the institution’s mission.

In March 2020, College faculty approved a series of revised ILOs proposed by the newly formed Assessment Committee. These ILOs, which are listed on TC3’s General Education webpage (5.6), provide an academic foundation of excellence for all College programs, with close alignment to both SUNY General Education (GE) outcomes and the College’s overall Mission and Vision (Table 2) (5.7).

Institutional Learning Outcomes:

Upon graduation, TC3 students will be able to:

- 1. *Communicate effectively, in oral and written forms, taking into consideration audience and purpose*
- 2. *Apply principles and methods of scientific inquiry and quantitative reasoning appropriate to their discipline*
- 3. *Use information, critical thinking, and the creative process to solve problems and reach conclusions*
- 4. *Use technology appropriate to their discipline*
- 5. *Describe the ways in which social, economic, or environmental sustainability depends on their own and the collective contributions of a diversity of ideas and people*

Table 2. Alignment of Institutional Learning Outcomes with the Mission and Vision.					
Mission/Vision	Curiosity and Inquiry	Innovative Educational Pathways	Meaningful Work, Economic Growth, Brighter Future	Personal, Economic, Social Vitality in Our Community	Transformative Power of Learning
Institutional Learning Outcome					
Communication			X		X
Scientific/Quantitative Reasoning	X	X			
Critical/Creative Thinking	X	X		X	X
Use of Technology		X			
Sustainability			X	X	X

Following the approval of the ILOs, the Provost’s Office charged department chairs with reevaluating how well each degree program’s course requirements supported both the existing PLOs and the new ILOs to affirm that the programs were designed for successful student outcomes. These new curriculum maps (5.8) informed updates that chairs made to MCS, the template for which was revised to show the mapping of SLOs to relevant PLOs, ILOs, and SUNY GE (5.2). The resulting curriculum maps (5.8), found on individual academic program pages on the College website, serve as a visual guidepost for the interconnectivity of each program’s core courses, PLOs, and ILOs, and for the overall relevance of students’ educational experiences.

After the Academic Assessment Committee was formed, the functions of its chair and members were formally codified in Spring 2021 and most recently updated in 2025 in the Academic Assessment Committee Charge document (5.9). The Academic Assessment Committee serves the academic community by providing recommendations for Curriculum Maps and Department Assessment Reports (DARs) and collaborating with

the Curriculum Committee and Provost Office to maintain compliance with MSCHE Guidelines. The Assessment Committee has been formally incorporated into the curriculum approval process via the Coursedog catalog management system, with the Committee Chair and the relevant Academic Community Assessment Committee members reviewing SLOs and PLOs for MCS and degree program proposals. This provides the Academic Assessment Committee with greater oversight of SLOs and PLOs rather than merely reviewing the results of assessment. The interconnectivity of these outcomes is reinforced yearly through a guiding Schedule of Academic Assessment Activities calendar (5.3) and through successful reporting on assessment activity at a variety of levels, including by instructors, department chairs, the Academic Assessment Committee Chair and members, and the Provost's Office. In addition, the College has established a 5-year rotating schedule (5.6) for the review of all academic programs, SUNY General Education courses, and ILOs.

Criterion 2. Organized and systematic assessments, conducted by faculty and/or appropriate professionals, evaluating the extent of student achievement of institutional and degree/program goals. Institutions should: define student learning outcomes that are appropriate to higher education with defensible standards for assessing whether students are achieving those outcomes; articulate how they prepare students in a manner consistent with their mission for successful careers, meaningful lives, and, where appropriate, further education. They collect and provide data on the extent to which they are meeting these goals; and support and sustain assessment of student learning outcomes and communicate the results of this assessment to stakeholders;

The College's update of the assessment process required faculty to revise each course's SLOs according to the new MCS template and in a manner that was both appropriate to higher education and defensible in the assessment process. Evidence of this massive migration from the old MCS template to the new MCS template that includes SLOs and mapping can be found in the MCS Status Excel Sheet (5.10). The College Teaching Center provided professional development to train faculty on SLO writing, curriculum mapping, and SLO assessment (5.11);(5.12);(5.13). As part of course approval process within Coursedog, the Academic Assessment Committee evaluates SLOs in every MCS proposal for clarity and assessability (5.14). Once an MCS is approved by Curriculum Committee, the updates are incorporated into curriculum maps and added to the catalog via Coursedog, making then visible to students through the online catalog.

Each instructor reports their assessment results for all SLOs in all course sections at the end of the semester using the SLO form (5.15). In this systematic process, department members discuss what the categories of met expectations, approaching expectations, and did not meet expectations mean so that SLO reporting is consistent across sections taught by different instructors in order to allow for meaningful comparisons of SLO data across multiple sections of the same course. This exercise encourages a deeper level of intentionality for instructors when they build their assignments and course content each semester.

To support and sustain SLO, PLO, and ILO assessment, as well as facilitate discussion with stakeholders, the College uses Department Assessment Reports (DARs) (5.16) to assess PLOs in each department's academic programs and to provide the necessary connective tissue between instructors, department chairs, the

Provost's Office, and the Academic Assessment Committee. Using each program's curriculum map, department chairs compile DARs from assessments of individual course SLOs that assess PLOs that map to the ILO being assessed for the academic year. DARs allow department chairs to identify outliers, anomalies, or other aspects of courses and programs that need improvement. As a result, DARs serve as a conduit for collaboration each year, encouraging department-wide participation each fall semester to determine assessment approaches for the individual SLOs being mapped to the upcoming scheduled ILO in Section 1 and to reflect on how the previous year's efforts to map to that scheduled ILO went as they close the loop in Section 4 of the DAR. Department chairs use the summer to complete Section 2 (PLO results) and Section 3 (Conclusions and Recommendations) to analyze the assessment report data from that year's subset of courses in Power BI and look for areas of success or opportunities for revision. For example, in 2024-25, the members of the Creative Writing Program completed individual assessments of each course and collaborated on their DAR. They found that there was no common course that could be assessed for a culmination of skills or mastery of their discipline. To close that loop, the faculty redesigned the program to include a new capstone course (5.17). This new course provided the opportunity to assess the culmination of the Creative Writing students' skills and to better gauge whether the program was successfully preparing students in the ways intended by the department.

As another example of a DAR leading to effective revision, in 2023-24, the Communications Department's DAR revealed that one of the first-semester major-specific courses for all Communications programs, COMM101, had a very low success rate, both in supporting "ILO#5: Sustainability" and in the number of students getting a grade of C or above in the course. Upon closer examination, it became clear that two revisions were necessary. First, the COMM101 MCS required the course to cover SLOs that mapped to multiple PLO and ILO requirements, resulting in the curriculum being too dense. In response, faculty revised the content of the course. Second, the placement of the course in the first semester of the first year on the COMM program sheets required a certain level of mastery acquired from other courses that students had not yet taken. As a result, faculty decided to move COMM101 to the second year to increase student success rates. These changes were discussed with department members, the Provost's Office, and the Academic Assessment Committee, and documented by the program chair in that year's Communications DAR Section 4 "Closing the Loop" (5.18).

The College's ILOs affirm its Mission and Vision (Table 2), and because each degree maps to these ILOs, all students take courses that consistently support successful student outcomes whether transitioning directly to a career or further education. Two examples that demonstrate career alignment in A.A.S. programs are the Sustainable Farming & Food Systems A.A.S. (5.19) and the Applied Science & Technology A.A.S. (5.20) degrees; in both cases, program faculty wrote PLOs that promote the skills needed to find employment in their field while also connecting meaningfully to the College's overall ILOs and Mission. The College's A.S. degrees serve as building blocks for academic excellence and successful transfer to 4-year institutions. Both the Psychology & Social Science A.S. (5.21) and the Environmental Studies A.S. (5.22) degrees provide examples of transfer programs that prepare their students appropriately for further education. These programs' curriculum maps identify PLOs that are supported by the skill sets in specific course SLOs while also serving to underline the overall mission of the College in their ILOs.

The College's repeating, 5-year schedule of individual ILO assessment, with related General Education competencies and categories included, is sustained by the collaboration of the academic departments, the Academic Assessment Committee, and the Provost's Office in the completion of DARs (yearly), Chair

Reports (yearly), and Academic Program Reviews (APRs) (every 5 years for each program). Program review is the mechanism by which Chairs review data to support skill, career, and transfer alignment in each of their degree programs. The College's last Self-Study revealed that while the completion rate of APRs was high, the format and structure did not consistently result in meaningful reflection and revision. In response to this gap in analysis, the APR template was revised to include more data on workforce trends and student outcomes. In addition, the Provost began to use his response to each APR to provide robust institution-level analysis and recommendations for improvement, thereby closing the loop. Examples of this include the Graphic Design A.S. APR (5.23) and Provost response (5.24), the Sport Management A.S. APR (5.25) and Provost response (2026000_s5_SpManAPR_Provost_response.pdf), and the Computer Science A.S. APR (5.26) and Provost response (2026000_s5_CompSciAPR_Provost_response.pdf). To further codify the processes and close the loop on the assessment work of the past three years, Academic Affairs plans a series of days for academic assessment discussion, beginning Fall 2026.

The revised APR template contains sections devoted to labor market and transfer data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and made possible through institutional investment in high-quality data sources and analytics tools, such as Power BI. The labor market section provides job market information and expected job skills with data drawn from Lightcast, an economic modeling company that evaluates the job markets in the local area. Chairs compare these data to their current PLOs to align career-related knowledge and skillsets. The transfer section provides data drawn from IPEDS regarding degree completion and transfer. Chairs use these data to discuss the academic success and goal achievement of students in their programs and to assess the value of current PLOs. For example, the Computer Science program's 2023-2024 APR (5.27) examined what programming language and technical skills were waning or growing in relevance, both for the program's career-focused A.A.S. degrees and its A.S. transfer degree. The career skills addressed within A.A.S. programs are also informed by advisory boards. By meeting with advisory boards and consulting with partners in industry, department chairs overseeing A.A.S. degrees can ensure that curriculum maps maintain alignment with current workforce needs. For example, the Hospitality and Food Systems Programs Advisory Board (5.28) serves multiple programs within a single Academic Community and consists of relevant staff within the College, area schools, and local business leaders (5.29). Advisory boards assist faculty in identifying community needs and incorporating those into the degrees' curricula. In addition, the College's Workforce Development office connects faculty with appropriate industry partners at coordinated roundtable events, such as ones for healthcare (5.30) and manufacturing (5.31), to ensure that career skills built into degree programs are relevant. Recently, the College joined the Business & Industry Leadership Team (BILT) Academy Cohorts for Microelectronics and Nanotechnology (5.32) to build stronger connections between technical education programs and employers. Future career success is also aided by the applied learning requirements found in a variety of degree programs, such as the Chemical Dependency Counseling A.A.S. (5.33) and Early Childhood Education A.A.S. (5.34) degree programs which integrate opportunities for students to put their skills to work in real world scenarios.

When considering the institutional priority of academic excellence, it is important to note that the College is a part of the larger SUNY system, and its Associate's degrees have robust SUNY GE category requirements that are detailed in academic program sheets and DegreeWorks (5.35). Each MCS identifies any mapping between SLO's, SUNY GE, PLOs, and ILOs. For example, some individual MCS that include mapping to both ILO5 and SUNY's GE requirement for "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice" (DEISJ) are found in

ENVS102: Environment & Technology (5.36), ENGL102: Approaches to Literature (5.37), and ENGL210: Intercultural Communication (5.38). The Chair of the Academic Assessment Committee provides an in-depth analysis each year on how well courses meet those SLOs, covering all GE requirements on a rotating 3-year schedule (5.6). For instance, the Assessment Chair's 2024 GE report on the DEISJ requirement provided a solid overview of how well courses did in supporting that goal (5.39). Therefore, in addition to adhering ILO/PLO/SLO requirements, the SUNY-wide requirement for proficiency in all three Core Competencies, as well as seven Skills and Knowledge areas including Communication, DEISJ, Mathematics, and Natural Sciences, ensures that our degrees expose students to a wide variety of perspectives and disciplines and maintain academic excellence.

Criterion 3. Consideration and use of disaggregated assessment results for all student populations for the improvement of student learning outcomes, student achievement, and institutional and program-level educational effectiveness;

Institutional Research (IR) collects enrollment, completion, retention, and persistence data for each program that can be disaggregated across relevant dimensions such as age, gender, ethnicity/race, Pell & TAP status, instructional modality, enrollments status, etc. These data are used for internal decision-making, while also being relevant for State (SUNY, NYSED) and federal reporting (IPEDS). Data are maintained and regularly monitored by IR in data visualization dashboards in Power BI for regular internal monitoring by key constituencies such as chairs and the Provost's Office. In addition, these dashboards support and inform the Strategic Enrollment Planning process (5.40). The College makes use of the National Clearinghouse data to regularly monitor transfer rates for all programs; these data can also be disaggregated by various dimensions.

Initially, IR shared these disaggregated data sets on program enrollment data with department chairs through Power BI for use in APRs and Chair Reports. Historical examples of these APRs include those prepared for the Sport Management A.S. (5.41), Liberal Arts and Sciences-Social Science A.S. (5.42), and Entrepreneurship A.A.S. (5.43) degree programs while examples completed using the new APR template include the Computer Information Systems A.A.S. (5.44), Paralegal A.A.S. (5.45), and Accounting A.S. and A.A.S. (5.46) programs. In addition to enrollment data, Chair Reports include disaggregated (by program but not by demographic variables) retention, transfer-out, and program completion rates, and course success, as well as labor data and program alignment. Chairs analyze whether the labor market's desired skill sets align with current PLOs to allow for informed and responsive program revisions.

All faculty have access to programmatic data sets on the Faculty SharePoint site, while Chairs have access to more detailed Power BI data sets for disaggregated achievement data. The labor market data in Chair Reports come from Lightcast for market trends and the TC3 Graduate Survey for job placement rates. The job placement data has limitations due to a low (20-32%) survey response rate (5.47). To improve the comprehensiveness of that data, the College collaborated with Lightcast to use data scraping techniques to find alumni online with limited success. While this remains a challenge for many community colleges, the College continues to identify better sources of national and state data sets regarding job placement and wages. For instance, TC3 is currently retrieving post-secondary wages from the Federal PSEO (Post-Secondary Employment Outreach) to explore the wages of its Top 4 programs in enrollment (5.48). The Nursing Program has robust job placement data, likely because it administers its own graduate survey

and its degree typically results in immediate employment. The benefit of a high response rate is evident in the quality of the program's evaluation plans from 2021-2022 (5.49), 2022-2023 (5.50), and 2023-2024 (5.51).

Though Department Assessment Reports are the means through which academic departments analyze SLOs and their effectiveness in supporting connected PLOs and ILOS, it is not yet possible to disaggregate these data at the student level. To rectify this, in 2025, the College obtained a license for Watermark to enable tracking of SLO outcomes at the student level by pulling data from the learning management system's gradebook. This reporting process will be implemented in Fall 2026.

Criterion 4. If applicable, adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of assessment services designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers;

After a thorough review, the College believes that it does not engage third-party providers to complete the work of assessment at any core level under this criterion.

Criterion 5. Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of assessment policies and processes utilized by the institution for the improvement of educational effectiveness. Evidence of the periodic assessment of assessment policies and procedures, the consideration of results, and follow-up when warranted.

As a result of the periodic assessment of assessment policies and procedures, the Assessment Committee Charge and Schedule of Assessment activities have evolved. For instance, in response to the creation of SLOs, the Curriculum Committee revised the original MCS template (5.52) to include a sections requiring the inclusion of SLOs and the mapping of those SLOs to any applicable PLOs or ILOs (5.53). To provide more support for faculty doing this mapping, the Assessment Committee altered its charge (5.14) to include a collaborative role with the Curriculum Committee in providing feedback on specific mapping within MCS and program proposals. As an additional assessment support, the Assessment Committee reviewed the completed 2023-24 DARs and provided feedback to department chairs through "Department Assessment Report Review" forms, noting any additional aspects of reports worth closer examination by the chairs (5.16). Typically, the Assessment Committee Chair provides a general, holistic review to all DARs while a member of the Assessment Committee reviewed DARs corresponding to their own Academic Community to bring their specific expertise to reviewing the subject matter more closely. This review provides each department with additional opportunities to learn about what is working or not working within their specific courses or the overall program. Two examples of DARs with corresponding DAR Review feedback from the Academic Assessment Committee can be found in the Engineering/Math DAR (5.54) and DAR Review (20260422_s5_DAR_review_form_5ES_5MS_23_24.docx), and the Business DAR (5.55) and DAR Review (5.56).

The Academic Assessment Committee's review of DARs has helped identify needs for more professional development or revisions to assessment forms or processes. Examples of this process of review, discussion, and revision are detailed in the Assessment Committee's monthly minutes (5.57). As the role of the Assessment Committee has changed over time to include deeper collaboration with the Curriculum Committee in course and program proposals, and as Chairs have become more confident with the PLO

assessment process, it was decided that rather than review every DAR, the Academic Assessment Committee would focus on proactive coordination with Chairs to support the assessment process.

In addition to revising assessment forms for clarity and ease of use, the Assessment Committee has also made several important changes aimed at emphasizing process over product, with the goal of communicating the results of assessment to improve teaching and learning at the College. After the initial DARs were introduced (5.58) and completed in 2022 and 2023, the Assessment Committee realized that collaboration was not given enough emphasis in the assessment process, in communicating assessment results within departments, and in collaborating on ideas for improvement. As a result, the Assessment Committee revised the DAR form for the January 2024 cycle (5.59). Later in 2024, Assessment Committee's review of the DAR revealed that there was confusion among some of the chairs about how to craft the written responses to the various prompts in each of the four required sections, as well as difficulty in effectively engaging with some of the technology within the form to incorporate Power BI data. In response to this, the Assessment Committee revised the DAR again (5.16) in time for the 2025 Assessment Cycle.

In 2024, the Academic Assessment Chair reviewed the assessment of SUNY GE courses. As some SUNY GE categories, and most competencies, span multiple departments, the Assessment Chair could not meet with each department separately, but instead provided faculty with general feedback on assessment best practices during a Faculty Meeting (20260422_s5_6Dec2024_faculty_meeting.pdf). Determining that this format was inadequate for supporting all faculty in their ability to close the loop for SUNY GE assessment, the Academic Assessment Committee, Institutional Effectiveness Council, and Provost's Office are collaborating on annual professional development "Assessment Days" to strengthen data literacy and assessment culture.

To support CollegeNow instructors' understanding of the assessment process and to help improve response rates, the Assessment Committee provided several professional development sessions through CollegeNow in Spring 2026 (5.60). These were conducted live on Teams by a member of the Assessment Committee and reviewed what the quantitative and qualitative data generated by instructors was used for at the department, program, and institutional level. The sessions were well-attended and generated a robust discussion of how to improve assessment methods and the quality of response rates. The sessions were recorded for instructors who could not be present.

Despite the Assessment Committee's work at establishing a robust academic assessment culture, the College continues to experience some challenges related to the assessment process. Starting in 2024, TC3 experienced a year of transition in the Provost's office, which led to gaps in the submission of APRs. Since the current Provost arrived in January 2025, 19 APRs have been submitted, with 5 past due. With these reviews in hand, the College is now able to move forward using these APRs to inform the improvement of academic programs and student outcomes. This experience led to the realization that the assessment process needed to be durable regardless of individuals in academic leadership. Therefore, the College initiated the hiring of three academic deans to lead and support faculty with the completion of assessment reports. In April 2026, the College and Faculty Association signed a one-year MOU to transition the campus from department chairs to deans, who begin work in July 2026. The 2026-2027 academic year provides a time to evaluate this new structure within shared governance and make any necessary adjustments for negotiations of the successor Faculty Association contract.

ALIGNMENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

Table 3. Standard-to-Institutional Priority Alignment			
MSCHE Standard / Criterion	Institutional Priority	Alignment Narrative (1–2 sentences)	Representative Evidence (Examples)
Standard 5 Criteria 1, 2, 3, 5	1	Newly developed curriculum maps and assessment processes at the course, program, and institutional level ensure core courses map to program and institutional learning outcomes and provide faculty with data-informed opportunities to reflect and improve upon teaching and learning. Systematic examination of our assessment process has resulted in significant improvements in our assessment processes.	Curriculum map template, SLO assessment form, DAR, Program Review template, DAR review form, Schedule of Suggested Assessment Activities.
Standard 5 Criteria 2,3	2	The newly developed program review template and program advisory boards help ensure that programs are aligned with labor market and transfer institution needs. New data dashboards allow chairs and IR to look at disaggregated success metrics, allowing the College to better serve all students.	Program Review template, Chair report template

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TC3 has done substantial work to build a process for performing organized, systematic assessments, including improving the clarity of SLOs and the assessment of those SLOs, in compliance with the requirements for Standard V. TC3 is dedicated to continuous improvement by identifying and remedying gaps in the assessment process to cultivate excellent outcomes in teaching, learning, community partnerships, and student success. Since implementing the recommendations provided by Middle States during the last review, the College has made great strides in creating a data-informed, collaborative academic assessment structure, process, and schedule, and remains committed to building upon this foundation in coming years.

Strengths

- The College has developed an accessible and comprehensive academic assessment infrastructure that supports transparency and sustained engagement in assessment activities. Some highlights of this strengthened process are: Department Assessment Reports, curriculum maps, chair reports, revised program reviews, documented committee feedback, and an overarching schedule of assessment activities. The College has strengthened its assessment infrastructure through the establishment of a clearly articulated Assessment Committee charge, supported by engaged leadership and representative membership across academic disciplines.
- The creation and integration of the Assessment Committee into the curriculum approval and review process demonstrates a systematic approach to ensuring that assessment of student learning informs curricular decision-making and supports continuous improvement using an inclusive and faculty led approach. The College has developed accessible assessment resources that support transparency and sustained engagement in assessment activities.

Areas for Improvement

- While the College has made significant strides in establishing processes for assessing student learning, including State University of New York General Education outcomes and Academic Program Review, opportunities exist to more consistently close the assessment loop and systematically document how findings inform curricular, pedagogical, and programmatic improvements. Greater integration of Academic Program Review results into Academic Affairs planning and institution-level strategic decision-making would further strengthen alignment between assessment and continuous improvement.
- The College collects information on post-completion outcomes; however, opportunities remain to enhance the systematic collection, analysis, and use of post-completion job placement and employment data. Strengthening these processes would support evidence-based program evaluation, improve alignment with workforce needs, and key strategic goals, and demonstrate the impact of educational programs on student success.

Recommendations

- The College should strengthen existing assessment structures by convening an annual assessment summit for faculty and academic leadership to review assessment processes and findings, including General Education assessment, and to promote consistent closing of the loop and dissemination of improvement actions across programs. Strengthening the assessment structure, with the support of academic leadership and shared governance, ensures that the results inform strategic planning and resource allocation.
- The College should strengthen stakeholder engagement by regularly sharing Academic Program Reviews and Department Assessment Reports with program advisory boards and systematically incorporating external feedback into program improvements, thereby enhancing alignment with workforce expectations and supporting continuous improvement of student outcomes.

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

Table 1. Standard 6 alignment with institutional priorities and strategic directions	
Category	Alignment
Primary Institutional Priorities Addressed	• Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility• Enhance institutional effectiveness, accountability, and transparency for responsible stewardship of resources
Strategic Directions Aligned	• Accountability & Transparency• Innovation & Excellence
Focus of the Standard	Integrated planning, budgeting, assessment, financial sustainability, facilities, technology, and continuous institutional improvement

INTRODUCTION

Since the last Self-Study, the College has strengthened institutional planning and assessment processes, more clearly linking unit-level goals to strategic priorities and ensuring that planning cycles are systematically connected to resource allocation and budgeting. Guided Pathways served as the central organizing framework when the College developed the first Academic Primary Plan (APP) and Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) in 2019. Coupled with this, the College began significant investments in data infrastructure which advanced the data-informed culture of planning at the College. This change enabled more informed and transparent decision-making at all levels and across units, laying the groundwork for a second, more assessable SEP. Having developed measurable goals through an inclusive process using a variety of datasets, the SEP and the SEP Council model inclusive and data-informed planning and inform the College's approach to subsequent planning efforts. Implementation of Slate (a customer relations management platform) led to increased enhancement of the data and engagement ecosystem. Slate forms a cornerstone of the College's enrollment and student engagement strategies and was identified as a key goal in the third SEP plan. This implementation is a key example of resource alignment coming from planning insights and has helped the College strengthen enrollment gains post-pandemic.

The current Strategic Plan reflects a deliberate institutional shift toward measurable, time-bound objectives. To increase planning capacity, accountability, and transparency, the College established the Institutional Effectiveness Division in Fall 2024 and reestablished the Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC) in Fall 2025, providing centralized leadership and shared governance oversight for planning and assessment. During 2025–26, the College implemented a reorganized Institutional Planning and Assessment Ecosystem (IPAE) that explicitly connects department goal setting, divisional planning, strategic plan implementation, and budgeting within a unified, Watermark-supported framework. The College's membership in Achieving the Dream (ATD) beginning in 2025 further advances the use of disaggregated data to address equity gaps in student outcomes and will help drive the planning and resource alignment necessary to address these gaps.

Collectively, these actions demonstrate the College's sustained, incremental progress from fragmented planning practices to a more integrated, assessable planning and resource allocation ecosystem grounded in integrity, accountability, and inclusive constituent engagement.

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

Criterion 1. Institutional and unit goals that are clearly stated, assessed appropriately, linked to mission and goal achievement, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, and are used for planning and resource allocation

The College has undergone substantial organizational change since 2019. The current organizational structure has five divisions: Academic Affairs, Administration, Finance, Enrollment Management & Student Affairs, and Institutional Effectiveness, each housing one or more departments for a total of 28 units (Figure 3). Standard VII describes the shared governance structure that has been designed to support campus participation in institutional planning and accountability for decision-making, and a visual summary is provided demonstrating the key committees and councils (6.1).

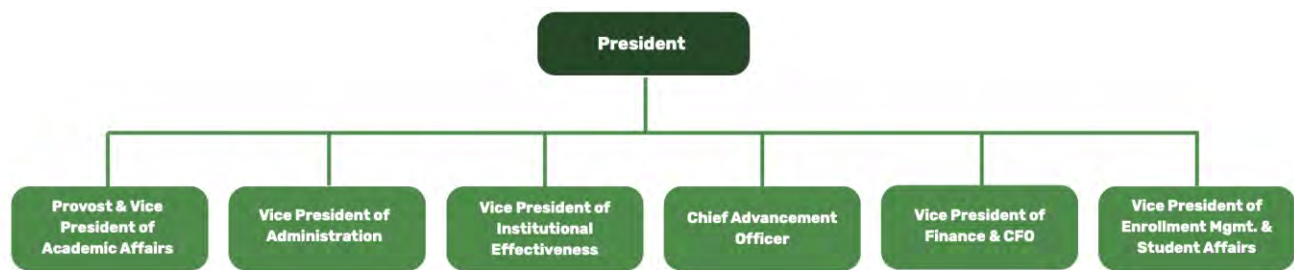


Figure 3: TC3 Division

The College engages in planning through an annual cycle that aligns department and unit goals with strategic planning and budgeting. Since the last Self-Study, the College has iteratively strengthened its planning processes to improve transparency and accountability. Before the 2025 departmental planning cycle division, all unit plans addressed institutional priorities broadly, with variability in the measurability of goals, making progress difficult to assess. Through iterative development, the IPAE now defines a clear, layered planning structure in which divisions and non-academic offices maintain a regularly reviewed plan aligned with the Strategic Plan (6.2). Approved by the College Senate (6.3) and the Board of Trustees and implemented during 2025–26, the IPAE integrates planning, assessment, and resource allocation across divisions within a transparent, shared-governance framework (Figure 4) (6.4). The IEC, whose members represent all College divisions, guides the implementation of the IPAE in conjunction with the Institutional Effectiveness Division (20260000_S6_IEC charge.pdf).



Figure 4: Overview of the Institutional Planning and Assessment Ecosystem.

Until 2025, College planning processes tended to be siloed, with departments plans and assessments that were only reviewed by their Divisional leads/ Vice Presidents and with limited shared governance participation, and institutional co-ordination. To help departments with planning and budgeting, the Office of Budget and Finance provided a template (6.161) requiring department managers to describe their mission and annual goals and how they support the College’s Mission, Strategic Plan, and diversity plan (known as EDJI), as well as discussing methods and metrics departments use to assess effectiveness . In the budgeting section of the template, managers were asked to prepare a narrative explanation for their requests. Examples include these from the Health and Wellness unit (6.5) and Student Conduct (24-25 currently in standard VI). These plans informed the introduction of a student support corridor based upon student surveys indicating needs for more services and the implementation of Maxient to enhance tracking of student complaints and Title IX concerns. In the Division of Academic Affairs, student feedback in retention focus groups informed the implementation of comprehensive online teaching and learning standards (6.6). SUNY Student Satisfaction Survey results informed the development of applied learning and career exploration experiences, overseen by the Office of Workforce Development (6.7). In support of this effort, the College allocated resources to support these efforts, including the strategic use of grant dollars, to implement technology solutions, strengthen faculty professional development, and hire personnel.

Over time, it became apparent that this planning structure did not adequately integrate the introduction of key division plans, such as the Academic Primary Plan (APP) or Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP). The College also recognized a need to strengthen non-academic assessment regarding writing measurable, time-defined (or SMART) goals at all levels. To increase transparency and accountability, all plans, including their goals, mapping, and outcomes, and budget requests, are tracked within a newly-acquired planning software, Watermark. College employees, including members of the IEC, have access to Watermark to review these plans and any associated contractual budget requests. The IEC in collaboration with divisional vice presidents, review plans and provide feedback to department managers, thus supporting consistent expectations (6.8). The IEC provided extensive training in Fall 2025 to support non-academic department managers in SMART goal development and the use of Watermark for mapping goals to higher-level plans (6.9). An example of this crosswalk within Watermark is the one for the ASAP department (6.11).

In this new process, all unit plans (department, division, and the institution’s Strategic Plan) are expected to include more clearly defined SMART goals that are mapped to related plans. The evolution of the divisional planning process is most evident within academic and enrollment planning. The College’s first APPs were written broadly with a large number of goals generally aligned with Guided Pathways (6.11), but their lack of discrete, time-defined goals and metrics aligned with the then Strategic Plan made assessment and

accountability difficult. Developed under the new process, the current 2025–28 APP clearly prioritizes academic program review and uses student enrollment data and detailed cost analyses to assess program viability and guide program development (6.12);(6.13);(6.14). Similarly, the College's third SEP, approved in 2025, sets annual enrollment goals based on demographic data and benchmarks reviewed by a cross-functional committee. The VP of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs provides weekly enrollment reports leading up to each semester with unit-specific action items (6.15). These data are included in the finance model informing tuition revenue projections (45% of annual budget) that in turn drives resource allocation (6.15);(6.16);(6.17).

Clearly defined divisional plans and goals make it more conducive for department managers to develop defined goals and budget requests. For example, in alignment with the SEP, the Strategic Marketing Department redesigned the College website. The College website now uses Google Analytics to improve recruitment (6.18). All unit plans from the most recent year are provided (6.19). Budget managers use division plans to prioritize funding requests, which the Finance Division evaluates based on strategic priorities (6.20);(6.21). Supporting this, the Vice President of Finance re-instituted zero-based budgeting, requiring budget managers to explicitly link resource requests to institutional plans (6.22).

While unit goals have long been linked to the College's Mission, Vision, and Values (MVV) and to pertinent institutional plans, these connections are now being clearly mapped within a cohesive and transparent process with built in assessment and accountability. The College has appropriately invested in the creation of an integrated planning framework (IPAE), shared governance oversight (IEC), and resources (Institutional Effectiveness Division and Watermark) to sustain ongoing institutional improvement. The opportunity for improvement here lies in the College making this a sustained practice and building a deeper assessment culture in non-academic offices through ongoing professional development.

Criterion 2. Clearly documented and communicated planning and improvement processes that provide for inclusive constituent participation;

The College's Strategic Plan and each division plan are developed through inclusive processes involving multiple opportunities for constituent input into plan goals and outcomes and oversight by shared governance. The College Senate reviews these plans, provides feedback and receives annual updates on plan operationalization. A sample calendar, showing the inclusion of shared governance, appears in the President's September 2025 opening remarks (6.23). These institutional planning processes include distribution to stakeholders and opportunities to provide feedback. For example, the College held several World Café events to deepen constituent engagement within planning processes, especially to identify perceptions related to student success priorities such as retention (6.24).

The evolution of the College's strategic enrollment planning process exemplifies its increasingly inclusive, data-informed approach. Responding to a 2020 external consultant report developed through interviews with departments (6.25) and relying heavily on data about declining high school graduation rates across New York, the then-Dean of Admissions developed the initial 2020-22 SEP, aligning it with the Strategic Plan and focusing primarily on recruitment (6.26). While a good first step, the plan lacked clearly defined goals with responsible parties attached. Recognizing the limitations of the plan, the next 2022-24 SEP, was prepared by a working group of representatives from across the College and included more measurable goals with responsible parties (6.27) (6.28). In Spring 2024, an externally facilitated strategic planning

process helped diverse working groups to develop the current SEP plan through a process with more extensive data input and rigor. To oversee SEP implementation and to ensure continuity through staffing changes, the College formed the SEP Council, which includes cross-campus representation from all College divisions (6.29). The SEP Council uses data shared by other divisions and units at the College to support its recommendations, leading to concrete institutional action. This is a clear illustration of how the College has strengthened its planning-to-improvement cycle in an iterative evaluation process. Regular enrollment tracking reports from the VP of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs to stakeholders support ongoing data-informed decision-making (6.30).

The College's current Facilities Master Plan (FMP) (6.31) represents another multi-stakeholder planning process. The FMP guides capital projects for 5–10 years in support of the College's Mission and its Strategic Plan Innovation and Excellence goal 2.4, while also allowing the College to leverage County and State funding for capital projects to improve infrastructure. FMP development followed an inclusive process, with multi-unit input and a campus-wide space needs survey (6.32);(6.33). The plan went through shared governance, including the College Senate and Board of Trustees (6.34). Similarly, the College's annual budget process includes input from all divisions and is reviewed by the College Senate and to the sponsor counties after Board of Trustees approval (6.35).

The College has used planning and assessment to identify opportunities for improvement of the student experience both within and outside the classroom and has allocated resources accordingly. As one example, following assessment of student satisfaction data indicating needed improvements in the residence halls (6.36), the College made substantial investments in residence hall upgrades to better meet student needs (6.37)(p.4). As another, the College commissioned an external review to better understand student experience challenges, and findings from that study informed structural and programmatic decisions, including the merger of the Enrollment Management and Student Affairs areas into a single Office of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs in order to strengthen coordination between offices focused on all stages of the student experience outside the classroom (6.38). These examples illustrate the College's growing capacity to close the loop between assessment findings and institutional action.

Criterion 3. Planning that integrates goals for institutional effectiveness and improvement, including a focus on student achievement, educational outcomes, overall institutional improvement, and the results of institutional assessments

TC3 Mission

We foster lifelong curiosity and inquiry through innovative educational pathways, leading students to meaningful work, economic growth, and a brighter future.

All institutional planning aligns with the College's updated Mission, Vision and Values (MVV), which reflect national conversations on community colleges and economic mobility and emphasize improved student and educational outcomes (6.39). Informed by stakeholder engagement and data analysis, the College community renewed the MVV in 2023–24 and the Strategic Plan in 2024–25, as described in Standard I. The data-informed, outcomes-focused approach is evident in Strategic Plan Objective 1.2.1, which establishes annual benchmarked goals for credit momentum, retention, completion, transfer, and employment (6.40).

The College's focus on student outcomes can also be seen in institutional planning efforts before the current Strategic Plan. From 2019-24, the College aligned its prior Academic Primary Plan (APP) and Strategic Plan with national student success frameworks by implementing key Guided Pathways principles, contributing to modest improvements in Fall-to-Fall retention and 150% completion rates. Recognizing that despite these efforts, outcomes remained below peer benchmarks, and the College began a deeper assessment of its early momentum and student success indicators, leading to the College joining ATD in 2025 (6.41). This institutional affiliation with ATD has influenced the College's examination of educational effectiveness, curricular alignment, and equity in student outcomes. Cross-divisional ATD Core and Data Teams are collaborating to review data and to identify and implement high-impact practices to improve student outcomes and the student experience. These efforts clearly align with the 2025-28 Strategic Plan. The College has also recently implemented a SUNY Academic Momentum plan focused on improving student early momentum metrics, and the work from this plan is currently underway.

The College's Strategic Plan includes a clear emphasis on institutional effectiveness in Strategic Direction I: Accountability and Transparency. This direction affirms TC3's commitment to integrity through transparent governance and the sharing of data related to institutional effectiveness and learner outcomes. To advance this work, the College established an Institutional Effectiveness Division in Fall 2024 with two new positions: Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Dean of Organizational Development and Institutional Effectiveness positions to coordinate planning and assessment efforts (6.42). In Fall 2025, the College created the Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC) as a cross-campus body charged with supporting institutional effectiveness through training, coordination of planning and reporting timelines, and review of metrics associated with college-wide initiatives such as ATD and SUNY Academic Momentum (6.43);(6.44). In November 2025, the IEC approved institutional effectiveness indicators tracking key outcomes, including student success, financial performance, and faculty and staff metrics (6.45). The IEC tracks institutional metrics through a Power BI dashboard, while unit assessment of progress towards goals is tracked in the planning software, Watermark.

The current Strategic Plan's Directions 3 and 4 focus on clarifying the path for students through academic and student support. As an example, the College has made significant progress on Goal 3.3's aim to supplement the SUNY "seamless transfer guarantee" with at least three new articulation agreements for each transfer degree program, signed by August 2027. In 2025-26, the College has already signed ten new articulation agreements. The College has also aligned resources with this priority through the creation of a temporary Associate Dean position to which this work was assigned. This work will soon be assumed by three academic deans in June 2025.

The College's implementation of institutional plans uses robust data practices and participatory stakeholder inclusion. Examples of this include implementation of the SEP using enrollment and completion data to guide marketing, resource allocation, and website redesign (6.46); weekly enrollment tracking reports support retention efforts (6.30); and World Café events to integrate qualitative feedback (6.47). The College reports on KPIs through MSCHE AIU (6.48) and IPEDS submissions (6.49). Regular presentations to the Board of Trustees provide enrollment and financial trend updates (6.50). Each August, campus leaders share institutional performance data at an all-campus meeting (6.51).

Criterion 4. planning for diversity, equity, and inclusion that is aligned with the institution's mission and goals, maintains sufficient resources, and leads to institutional improvement

The College advances community well-being and student success through intentional planning, resource allocation, and assessment aligned with Strategic Direction 4: Identity and Belonging. Oversight of equity-focused planning is shared among governance and advisory groups, including the Diversity, Equity, Action Council (DEAC), Faculty Student Association (FSA), Student Government Association (SGA), the SEP Council, the IEC, College Senate, Executive Council and the Board of Trustees.

DEAC's 2025–28 Equity, Diversity, Justice, and Inclusion (EDJI) Plan establishes measurable goals to improve retention and the sense of belonging among student populations with historically lower outcomes (6.52). Using disaggregated academic momentum data, DEAC identified priority populations and organized targeted work groups to address equity gaps. Assessment of institutional effectiveness is supported through regular administration of the Campus Climate Survey (6.53);(6.54) and the Student Satisfaction Survey (6.36), with findings used to inform planning, resource allocation, and improvement of student support services, as described in Standard IV.

The College allocates resources to support diverse student populations through high-impact practices, including the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), SUNY Advancing Success in Associates Pathways (ASAP), and Student Success Coaching. The SEP Council uses enrollment data and projections to align student support services with changing student needs, in addition, the College has used Achieving the Dream's data reports for the College that are disaggregated by relevant populations to inform its work. In response to growth in adult enrollment and to provide targeted support to those students, the College launched an Adult Learning Hub in Spring 2026, staffed by a director, admissions counsellor and student success advisor. Overall, the College has robust wrap-around services to support students of many different backgrounds and has increased financial investment in those services in the last several years. In 2024, the College allocated 13% of its core expenses to student services, which is an increase from the 8% allocated in 2023 (6.55)(benchmark average was 12%).

In May 2025, SUNY announced the SUNY Reconnect program, which provides free community college for students aged 25-55 enrolled in specific degree programs leading to high-wage, high-demand jobs. SUNY Reconnect has greatly impacted student demographics at the College as well as increasing the demand for services and support for adult learners. In 2022, approximately 19% of new degree-seeking students at the College were 25 years old or older (6.56). This population has increased to over 50% of new degree seeking students in Spring 2026. In response to analysis of regional demographics highlighting the declining population of traditionally aged students, the College secured a grant in 2023 to hire an admissions professional dedicated to recruiting adult learners. As a result, the College was well-positioned to benefit from SUNY's Reconnect as it could quickly leverage the relationships that admissions professional had already built in the community.

Student demographic data indicate alignment between the College and its sponsoring counties (Table 2). Moreover, 54% of TC3 students were awarded Pell in AY 2023–2024 (IPEDS snapshot) indicating financial need compared to 50% of benchmark community colleges in NY. Both counties that College serves have poverty rates close to 20% (6.57);(6.58). Together, these data demonstrate that the College lives by its

Mission to provide opportunities for economic growth and brighter futures equitably for all members of the community.

Table 2. Percent of all students enrolled by race ethnicity snapshot relative to county distribution of race/ethnicity: Fall 2024								
	American Indian / Alaska Native	Asian	Black / African American	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	White	Two or more races	Unknown or US Non-resident
Enrollment by race/ethnicity (IPEDS)	0.6	2.7	4.6	5.7	0.1	64.2	3.6	18.6 - mostly CollegeNow
E.g. Tompkins County Demographics (Census Data)	0.5	10.1 - mostly <18yrs	4.4	5.4	0.5	77	3.5	

Criterion 5. financial planning and budgeting process that is aligned with the institution's mission and goals, evidence-based, and clearly linked to the institution's and units' strategic plans/ objectives.

The College aligns budgeting and long-term financial planning with its MVV, Strategic Plan, and unit planning (6.59) and sets clear annual financial goals based on analysis of core revenues and expenses and in alignment with the College's strategic goals. The annual budgeting process is inclusive and participatory, incorporating input from departments, faculty, staff, students, and governance bodies, and budget policies are documented in official manuals (6.60). The President presents a balanced budget to the Board of Trustees annually, and the Vice President of Finance provides the Board with monthly financial reports (6.61). The Vice President of Finance also provides periodic updates about the budget to the College Senate (6.62).

The Budget and Finance Office conducts revenue analysis for budget preparation. The four main components of the revenue are New York State contributions, local appropriations (sponsor county contributions and county chargebacks from students outside of the sponsor counties), student revenue, and government grants and contracts (Table 3). The Vice President of Finance projects revenues annually as part of the budgeting process. Since 2019, revenues from State contributions have remained flat. Small SUNY and NYSED grants have led to some increases in government grants and contracts. These restricted funds can only be used as defined by the State; therefore, these are not allowable for use with current college expenses. County chargebacks have grown with the growth of concurrent enrollment outside sponsor counties. The College President and the Vice President of Finance successfully appealed to the two sponsor counties for a 5% increase in county contributions in 2026 (6.63). Despite this increase, student revenue forms a significant part of overall College revenues. Securing grant funding and developing partnerships for shared services remains a priority for the College as it represents an opportunity to diversify revenue sources and diversification and presents an opportunity to pilot new initiatives.

Table 3. Percent distribution of core revenues by source (GASB) in fiscal year 2023	
Source	Percent
Tuition and fees	24.3
State appropriations	24.5
Local appropriations	26.8
Government grants and contracts	20.6
Other core revenues	4.0

Student enrollment at the College is divided into “core” and concurrent enrollment (or “college in the high school” enrollment). Student revenue projections are carried out by the Vice President of Finance in collaboration with the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs and the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness. Projection models are based on demographic factors, historical yields from sub-populations, detailed cohort retention analysis, and qualitative scanning of internal and external constraints (6.64). Targets and performance are closely monitored throughout the year using daily monitoring reports (6.65). The campus community, Board of Trustees and SEP Council are provided regular updates by the College President and Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, while also having access to Power BI enrollment dashboards.

The College has prioritized strategic enrollment planning in the aftermath of the pandemic as the College experienced core enrollment decline related to both COVID-19 impacts and the declining population of traditional aged students in the region. Although concurrent enrollment has remained steady post-pandemic, it constitutes a smaller portion of the College’s revenue. The current SEP was developed to address this new demographic landscape and relied on high internal stakeholder engagement and the extensive analysis of data regarding internal and external enrollment factors. This SEP, approved November 2024 and updated August 2025, aligns with the College MVV and includes trend analysis and enrollment projections (6.66);(6.67). The SEP Council regularly facilitates data summits to align strategic projects at the College with enrollment and retention goals. The Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs provides the College with regular tracking reports, further supporting data-driven decision-making (6.68). These efforts have collectively resulted in a stabilization of enrollment trends, and the College is making incremental progress towards the goal of reaching pre-pandemic core enrollment levels (Figure 5). As discussed above, much of that enrollment stabilization and anticipated growth is due to the increasing number of incoming students aged 25 and older enrolling due to the College’s targeted adult student recruitment efforts and SUNY Reconnect. During this same period, total student enrollment, which includes concurrent enrollment students, has stayed relatively stable (Figure 5).

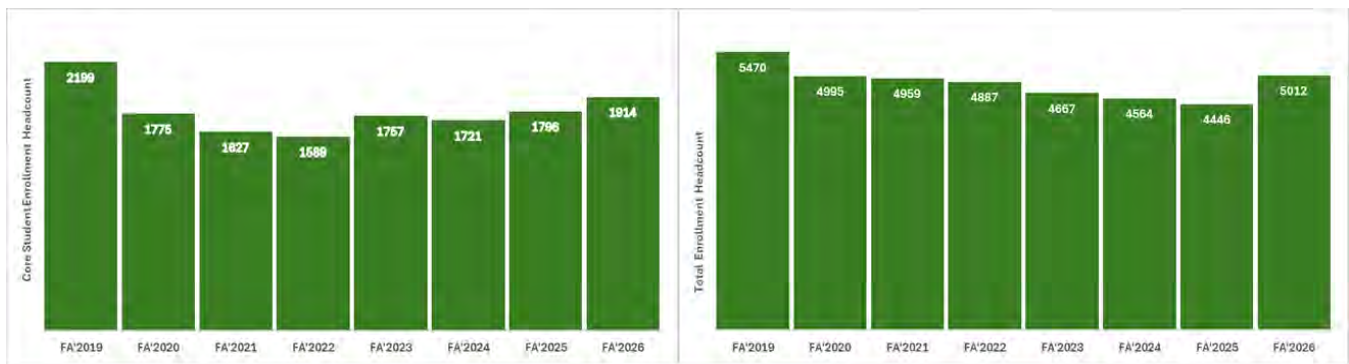


Figure 5. Enrollment trends for core students (left) and total student headcount (right) with FA'26 projection (Source: College Data; SEP dashboard).

Staffing and contractual expenses constitute the two main expenses of the College. Departmental budget requests for contractual expenses from 2024-25 clearly tie departmental planning to the Strategic Plan, equity and inclusion initiatives, academic priorities, and technology needs. For example, Student Activities budget allocations are tied directly to 2019-24 Strategic Plan theme one (6.69). Personnel and benefits expenses are also aligned with the College's strategic goals and modeled by Human Resources on an annual basis based on factors such as collective bargaining agreements and health care costs.

Once expenses and revenues are projected, a preliminary budget is presented to shared governance groups, followed by divisional revisions and the drafting of a final budget. Once the final budget is drafted, the President reviews it, followed by a review of the draft by the Board in April and final approval in the summer. This budget process happens on an established, annual calendar. The approved budget is accessible through institutional reporting tools (6.70). College progress towards enrollment and associated revenue goals are tracked through daily reports reviewed by the executive team and other campus leaders (6.71). In 2025-26, the College integrated the planning and budget process into Watermark, which is used as a system-wide clearinghouse for departmental budget submissions, departmental goal-setting, and annual division assessment. The Athletics and Recreation contractual budget request is provided as an example (6.72).

Due to the College's efforts to manage cost and reduce reliance on the fund balance, it has grown to \$4.3 million, which represents approximately 12.5% of the operating budget. That percentage lies towards the upper end of SUNY's recommended fund balance size of 5%-15% of the total operating budget. The College built its fund balance through planned stewardship of resources during the COVID-19 pandemic and careful use of federal HEERF dollars (6.73) (Table 4). Intentional long-term fiscal stewardship, including growing the fund balance, has focused on strengthening mission-aligned functions of the College while reducing the College footprint in resource-intensive ancillary functions. For example, as enrollment declined in the Cortland and Ithaca extension centers, the College took them offline, and they are being repurposed or sold. Similarly, a high-cost culinary facility, an Other Instructional Site (OIS) for the low enrollment Culinary Arts A.A.S. program enrollment, was recently closed (6.74).

Table 4. Use of fund balance and HEERF aid as part of the operating budget.			
	Operating Revenue (\$)	Approved Use of Fund Balance (\$)	Draw Federal HEERF aid (\$)
2021-2022	33,073,376	0	2,120,459
2022-2023	33,698,419	600,000	100,000
2023-2024	34,862,992	1,003,562	N/A
2024-2025	35,185,275	1,127,425	N/A
2025-2026	34,134,942	28,515	N/A

The Facilities Master Plan (FMP) (6.75) represents an important step in the College’s long-term financial and infrastructure planning. Having an FMP allows the College to secure matching funds for SUNY capital projects and to develop facilities that support the College’s institutional plans. For example, Strategic Goal 4.2.3 identifies the need for a Career Center, a project that requires capital funds. The College obtained seed funding for this project from New York State based on the FMP.

College financial planning documents, including the 2021–22 Business Plan, show multi-year budget planning and SUNY capital updates and reflect risk assessment and financial capacity alignment (6.76) (6.77). More recently, the Budget and Finance Office experienced personnel changes (both new employees and multiple turnovers in the Chief Financial Officer position) that made multi-year financial planning challenging. The College is implementing recommendations from a recent external consultant analysis to build resilience that will strengthen multi-year planning.

Criterion 6. fiscal and human resources as well as physical and technical infrastructure adequate to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

The College maintains adequate fiscal, human, physical, and technical resources to support operations and effective program delivery. IPEDS data comparing the College to peer institutions indicates that the College has significantly more FTE staff across a few different categories (Figure 4). The primary reason why instructional FTEs are above those of peers is that the College maintains low class caps and has only recently discontinued several low enrolled programs (6.78). Instructional costs are expected to decline and to come into line with peers based on these discontinuations and concerted efforts by the Provost’s Office to reduce the number of low-enrolled sections. Better alignment with peers can be seen in the other management categories. The College’s demographic composition of staff by race and gender remains comparable to peer institutions (6.49).

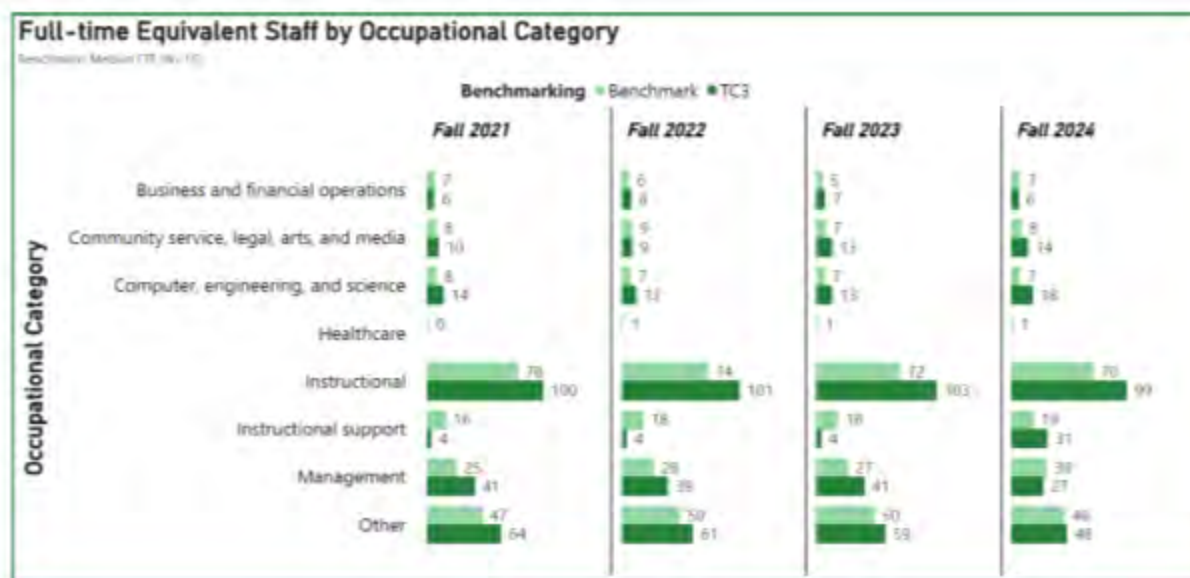


Figure 6: FTE staff by occupational category: Fall 2024 (Source: IPEDS comparative report)

The College's expenditures by category have remained relatively stable over the past four years, with instructional expenses being consistently the highest, followed by academic, institutional, and student support categories (Table 5). Funds spent on instruction have decreased approximately 5% as a percentage of total expenditures since 2022, reflecting a focus on optimization of the academic portfolio and a reduction in the total number of course sections with low enrollment. The percentage of funds allocated to student support has increased approximately 3% since 2022, reflecting an increased focus on nonacademic support for the College's diverse student population. Compared to other small SUNY & CUNY community colleges, the College spends a higher percentage on instruction, student services and academic support, and less on institutional support (Figure 7) (6.79);(6.49);(6.80).

Category	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Academic support	17	17	18	18
Institutional support	15	13	15	15
Instruction	33	35	31	29
Other expenses deductions	16	11	8	5
Public service	1	1	0	0
Research	0	0	0	0
Scholarships and fellowships	9	14	17	19
Student services	9	9	10	13

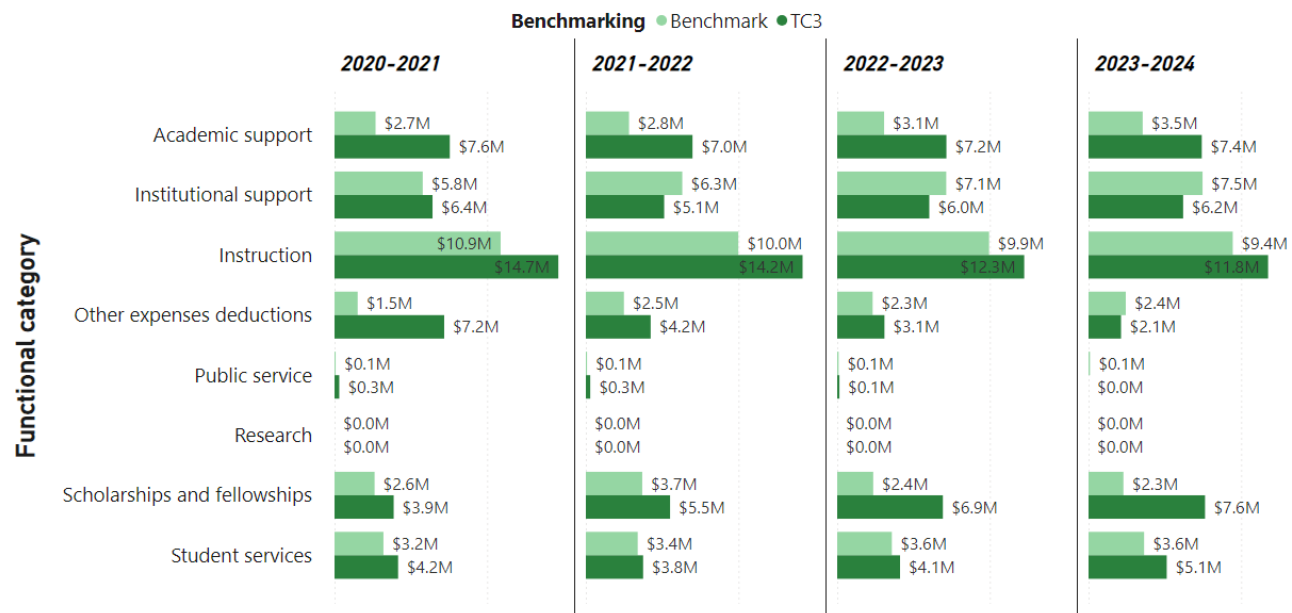


Figure 7: Core expenses by functional category compared to peers. Data source: IPEDS financial survey. Peer group is 16 two-year public colleges with enrollment sizes similar to TC3's.

The College has a large population of concurrent enrollment students, supported by our successful CollegeNow program. Relative to core students, the College has fewer expenditures related to CollegeNow student since instructional costs are borne by school districts. As a result, enrollment expenditures appear low in IPEDS reporting per FTE because all students (concurrent enrollment and core) are included. When expenses are examined based on core enrollment only, the College's per student expenditure is equal to or higher than those of peer institutions, and therefore the expenditure by category per FTE (Table 6) has limited value in understanding costs by category. Percent of total costs more accurately reflect the College's allocation of resources relative to peers. Both MSCHE's substantive change approval for high school Additional Locations and CollegeNow's continuous accreditation through NACEP affirm that the College directs sufficient resources to support a quality concurrent enrollment program (6.81).

Table 6. FY 2024 Comparison of Expenditures by Category per FTE with Peer Institutions		
Category	Tompkins Cortland	Peer Institutions
Instruction	\$4,333	\$8,062
Academic Support	\$2732	\$1910
Institutional Support	\$2283	\$4619
Student Services	\$1887	\$2138
Other Core Expenses	\$3595	\$3828

The College has a strong history of leveraging grant funding to invest in technological infrastructure. As part of a New York State grant to facilitate STEM program development, the College built new classrooms and laboratory spaces outfitted with modern technology designed to support degree programs aligned with area workforce needs (6.82). Additionally, the internet infrastructure within residence halls was improved in alignment with needs identified in student surveys (6.83). These improved systems, changes in cybersecurity protections, and the addition of a virtual information security compliance officer (VICISO) ensure the College's compliance with regulatory information security requirements (6.84);(6.85).

Recent strategic decisions, including closing the College's culinary center in December 2024 (6.86) and selling the Cortland extension center (6.87), reflect overall efforts to align resources with student needs and institutional capacity. These actions support the College's effort to "right size" to meet community needs while being fiscally responsible. For example, while financial statements indicated the College Foundation had sufficient funding to support its extension centers this was largely due to the rent that the College was paying to the foundation (6.88). An analysis of shifting demographics and the increase in demand for online learning led the College to close the centers in order to redirect resources to virtual instruction (6.89);(6.90), helping to grow online enrollment (6.91) and invest in online course quality.

Criterion 7. documented financial resources, funding base, and plans for financial development, including those from any related entities adequate to support its educational purposes and programs and to ensure financial stability.

The College demonstrates a structured, evolving approach to managing financial resources and ensuring long-term stability in support of its Mission. The funding base of the College has four main sources. Per the 2024-25 SUNY Revenue Analysis, the College receives 28.3% of revenue from New York State sponsorship, which constitutes an important related entity for a SUNY community college (Figure 6). As TC3 is governed by a Board of Trustees derived from two sponsor counties, the College gets sponsor county contributions as part of its overall revenue. The "local share" consists of county chargeback revenue based on students residing outside of the sponsor counties (16.5%), local sponsor county revenue (14.1%), and out-of-state portion of tuition (2.1%). It is evident from this data that the College is increasingly reliant on student tuition revenue, making strengthening enrollment and increasing retention while maintaining the cost structure keys to strengthening revenue. Grants represent an opportunity for revenue diversification in a period when state operating increases appear increasingly unlikely.

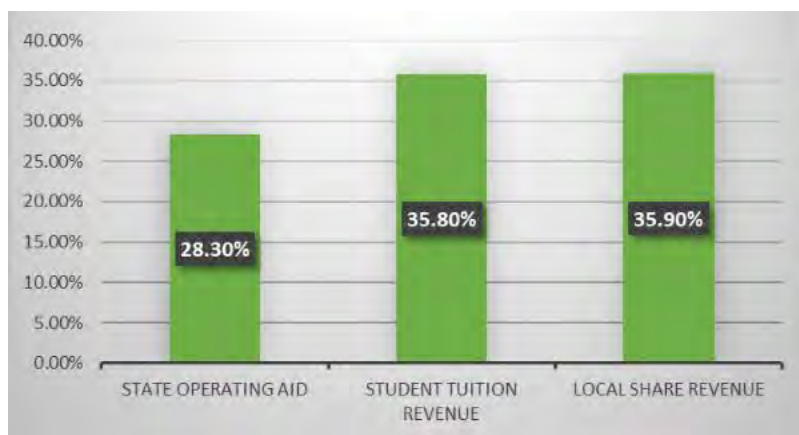


Figure 8: Analysis of revenue sources (%) in 2024-2025 (Source: 2024-2025 SUNY Revenue Analysis)

The College Foundation provides support to the institution through scholarships and limited restricted funding (6.92) or sample of TC3 budget that shows funding, or Foundation budget). In addition, the Faculty Student Association helps fund activities for students and the maintenance robust support services, including those related to health and wellness, athletics, and childcare. These services, supported by grants and student life fees, increase the College's attractiveness to potential students, thus supporting enrollment and retention. They are discussed in more detail in criterion 4 and Standard 4.

Trends of key AIU and IPEDS financial indicators show that the College's efforts towards fiscal stability are having a beneficial impact. For example, the Composite Financial Index (CFI) improved from -7.89 in 2022 to -4.72 in 2024 (6.93), representing a positive shift in financial status (Table 7). Errors in reporting in IPEDS finance caused CFI to be incorrectly recorded as -50.0 in the AIU dashboard for fiscal 2023. These errors have been corrected with IPEDS finance (Table 7). The College's CFI is comparable to similarly sized SUNY community colleges: the 2024 CFI for Cayuga Community College was lower at -10.18, while the CFIs for Columbia-Greene (-0.98) and Corning (-1.45) were higher based on the AIU data available. The College does not have any debt, and therefore the capitalization ratio is not calculated.

Table 7. Financial indicators (Source: AIU and IPEDS)			
Criteria	IPEDS 2022-23 (Fiscal 2021)	IPEDS 2023-24 (Fiscal 2022)	IPEDS 2024-25 (Calculated from IPEDS Finance; Fiscal 2023)
Primary reserve ratio (expendable net assets / total expenses)	-1.177	-1.22	-4.72
Net Operating Revenue Ratio (net operating income / total operating revenue)	0.11	-0.02	-0.009
Return on Net Assets Ratio (change in net assets / total net assets)	-0.29	0.05	0.014
Composite Financial Index (-4 to 10)	-7.89	-4.54	-4.72
Fund Balance	\$4.09M	\$4.98M	\$6.48M
Debt Service Payments	\$456,750	\$470,000	\$358,000

The College's focus on improving its financial strength is apparent in the emphasis on the primary reserve ratio within current Institutional Effectiveness Indicators (insert source). The College's short-term ability to withstand financial stress has improved in recent years as the fund balance has improved. However, New York State retirement liabilities remain a part of the expense reporting for the College (based on GASB 68 and 75). As a result, the financial indicators do not fully reflect this improvement (Table 7). The College's Net Operating Revenue Ratio has remained stable, suggesting progress in operational efficiency (6.94). Debt service has steadily decreased, indicating responsible debt management (6.95).

In November 2025, the College President provided a response to MSCHE concerns about the low CFI, detailing the College's commitment to strengthening financial resources, increasing enrollment, and improving the fund balance (6.96). Measures taken to support ongoing financial stability include modest (2%) tuition increases in 2025-26, targeted high-impact practices to improve retention, and the designation of specific fund balances to support capital improvements, completion of deferred maintenance, and other institutional needs. Controlling expenses is a key component of the strategy to strengthen the College's financial position. As outlined in the President's response, this has proven challenging as healthcare costs and inflationary pressures present significant challenges. Despite this, the College is committed to growing its fund balance; currently at \$4.3 million, which represents approximately 12.5% of the operating budget; this lies towards the upper end of SUNY's recommended fund balance size of 5%-15% of the total operating budget. Another component of the strategy to strengthen the College's position is to reduce financial obligations to its related entities. For example, the College has historically had significant obligations to its Foundation and has made significant progress in reducing these obligations, while balancing student needs, through the sale of the Cortland extension center and the leasing of the Ithaca extension center (6.97);(6.98). The 2021-22 Business Plan and ongoing CFO reports offer insights into financial risks and opportunities (6.76);(6.99). Financial statements, including those of the TC3 Foundation and Faculty Student Association (FSA), provide transparency into funding sources and expenditures, reinforcing institutional commitment to accountability (6.100).

The College employs various tuition discount strategies to enhance affordability and access, including scholarships for concurrent enrollment, faculty/staff waivers, housing incentives, and international program discounts (6.101);(6.102);(6.103);(6.104);(6.105);(6.106);(6.107).

Criterion 8. record of responsible fiscal management, including preparing a multi-year budget and an annual independent audit confirming financial viability and proper internal financial controls, with evidence of corrective measures taken to address any material findings cited in the audit or an accompanying management letter.

The College maintains a consistent record of responsible fiscal management through annual independent audits, inclusive budget development, and efforts to implement multi-year financial planning (6.108). These practices assure compliance and reinforce institutional strategic priorities, including a commitment to transparency and accountability.

Audited financial statements for the past four fiscal years, including those of the Foundation and FSA, confirm the College's financial viability and effective internal controls (6.109);(6.110);(6.111);(6.88);(6.112). Financial audits from the past four years have consistently resulted in unqualified opinions, indicating that the College presents financial statements fairly and accurately in all material respects, adhere to relevant accounting standards, and are free from significant errors or misrepresentations. However, in 2022-23 and 2023-24, the College received audit findings indicating needed improvement in information security. In response, the institution promptly implemented corrective action plans (6.113);(6.114), including significant improvements to cybersecurity, including better data storage and retention practices and mandatory cybersecurity training for all employees. This finding was resolved the subsequent year (2023-24). In response to an audit finding related to ledger management, the Finance division's corrective action plan addresses necessary improvements to the Finance staffing model, internal controls, and use of technology for efficiency. Supporting documentation, including management letters and financial statements from related entities such as Tompkins and Cortland Counties and SUNY System Administration, further contextualize the institution's financial position (6.115);(6.116);(6.117);(6.118).

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness collaborates with the Finance division to implement the Institutional Planning and Assessment Ecosystem (IPAE) (6.20), and both areas are represented on the IEC. As part of IPAE implementation, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Office of Budget and Finance integrated a zero-based budgeting framework (6.119) within the planning process, requiring budget managers to justify all department requests by linking them to institutional plans. The divisions are now cooperating on a multi-year budgeting process to support longer-term financial planning. Together, these efforts support responsible resource allocation.

Criterion 9. well-defined, inclusive decision-making processes and clear assignment of responsibility and accountability for achieving institutional and unit effectiveness.

The College maintains a well-documented organizational structure (6.120). These charts clarify roles, titles, reporting lines, and bargaining unit affiliations. Reorganization in 2024–25 improved efficiency and communication across departments. For example, Student Affairs was combined with Enrollment Management, a decision designed to improve retention and recruitment efforts by increasing collaboration within an integrated division (6.38).

The College promotes transparent, inclusive decision-making through meeting records available to the campus community through SharePoint, Teams or the employee website. Faculty meeting minutes reflect structured review processes, including curriculum discussions (6.121) and policy votes (6.122). Student Affairs agendas document accountability in key areas, including retention strategies (6.123), budget planning (6.124) assessment structures (6.124), and CAS assessment (6.125). Board of Trustees agendas and minutes confirm the Board's active role in budget development and oversight (6.126);(6.127).

These practices reflect a strong shared governance culture at the College. The College Senate and relevant College councils review Institutional plans and policies to ensuring alignment to the MVV (6.3);(6.128). As outlined in the College's IPAE, each budget manager develops department goals and a budget that allocates resources in alignment with relevant institutional plan goals. These budgets and annual plans are reviewed by the Division Vice Presidents, Finance, and IEC (6.43). All budgets and plans are stored in Watermark,

which documents clear lines of responsibility, priority goals for each department mapped to division and strategic goals, and metrics and outcomes, strengthening accountability by improving transparency and the ability to track goals (6.129).

An analysis of institutional support costs shows that the College has dedicated fewer resources to institutional support than peer institutions (Table 5, Figure 7). Recently, this has been bolstered by the establishment of the Institutional Effectiveness Division, greater support for human resource functions, and modernization of systems that form the backbone of institutional effectiveness, including Paycor (HR and payroll), Slate (Customer Relations Management), Coursedog (curriculum and catalog management), and Watermark (planning and assessment).

Criterion 10. comprehensive planning for facilities, infrastructure, and technology that includes consideration of sustainability and deferred maintenance and is linked to the institution's strategic and financial planning processes.

The College actively plans facilities, infrastructure, and technology to align with sustainability goals, deferred maintenance needs, and financial priorities. It maintains 84 instructional spaces—54 classrooms and 30 labs—totaling 75,700 square feet. Instructional space utilization is tracked within Power BI to support efficient management (6.130);(6.131);(6.132). The Baker Commons offers flexible spaces for study, presentations, and collaboration (6.133). The 2025 FMP prioritizes hyflex classrooms and modern teaching tools that align with educational priorities (6.134);(6.75), while also reimagining administrative and instructional areas to enhance collaboration (6.135). The College has also initiated several recent projects to improve teaching and learning and student support spaces. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, STEM laboratory spaces received significant, much needed upgrades. Recently, the College established the Panther Welcome Center as a one-stop, centralized location for admissions, advising, financial aid, and bursar services. The College has also created centralized locations for Opportunity Programs, such as ASAP and EOP, and established a center for adult learner support. One of the College's next plans outlined in the FMP and supported by data analysis for in the strategic planning process is the development of a campus career center to enhance post-graduation student employment outcomes. This mission-aligned, multi-year project has already received initial seed funding from the State.

The 2025–27 Technology Master Plan targets four priorities: replacing aging systems (e.g., Ellucian PowerCampus), strengthening cybersecurity, aligning contracts with campus needs, and supporting leadership succession and training (6.136). This plan aligns with Strategic Plan Goal 2.1, which is focused on modernizing software, streamlining processes, improving efficiency of campus staff through appropriate technological tools and professional development.

Facilities condition analyses inform capital requests and long-term facilities planning, and Capital Project Reports support transparency and planning (6.137);(6.138);(6.139). The College has identified 10 deferred maintenance projects totaling approximately \$500,000 (6.140). The current FMP positions the College for a 50% SUNY match in funding for capital projects. The College's portion of funding typically comes from grants, donations, and county sponsor funds. Before the new FMP was enacted, the College relied heavily on grants and donations to improve and expand facilities. For example, in 2023-2024, a \$3.1 million grant enabled the comprehensive remodeling and expansion of STEM lab space to both support existing science courses and springboard new engineering and engineering technology pathways (6.141);(6.82).

The College maintains adequate liability and property insurance through Bailey Insurance (6.142). Rental and lease agreements exist between the College and TC3 Foundation for multiple properties, including Ithaca Extension Center (6.143) TC3 Farm (6.144);(6.145), and Bahar Drive land (6.146). The College leases space to P-TECH, a public high school collaborating with the College to provide early college pathways (6.148).

As necessary, the College has outsourced select IT services to improve cybersecurity, including network infrastructure support, cloud hosting, and virtual CISO services. For example, ITEC provided CIO leadership to optimize expertise and financial resources (6.149);(6.150);(6.151);(6.85);(6.84) until a permanent director was hired. Leveraging outsourced IT services is appropriate for an institution of this size and resources, increasing capacity and quality within budget constraints.

Criterion 11. Compliance with its program responsibilities under existing federal Title IV and other state laws and regulations, including any audits of financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations.

The College is fully compliant with Title IV program responsibilities and demonstrates transparency through annual audits. The most recent Statement of Accreditation Status was affirmed in 2018 (6.152). The March 2021 Eligibility and Certification Approval Report confirms full certification status (6.153), and the Program Participation Agreement is valid through December 2026 (6.154). The College is not subject to heightened cash monitoring, has not undergone a Program Review since the last accreditation cycle, and has maintained uninterrupted Title IV eligibility. As a public institution, the College is not required to calculate a financial responsibility composite score (FRCS). Since 2020, the three-year cohort default rate has been 0%, though this is expected to change due to changes in federal loan repayment policies (6.155). The College completes an annual Single Audit, which includes Title IV compliance reporting under the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (6.88). These audits support the College's priority of securing adequate resources to provide high-quality education.

Criterion 12. strategies to measure and assess the adequacy and efficient utilization of institutional resources required to support the institution's mission and goals.

The College uses data-informed strategies to assess and allocate resources aligned with its Mission and strategic goals through documented, unit-level processes. In terms of human resource allocation, division heads and department/unit level budget managers collaborate to identify personnel needs, and these requests are aligned with the budget and planning cycle. One example of efficient resource planning at the division level can be seen in data-informed schedule management. From 2019 to 2024, a 22% drop in core student enrollment led Academic Affairs to schedule 21% fewer sections (from 623 to 491) without harming the ability of students to enroll in needed classes. Such data-informed schedule management is possible due to the College's investment in data analysis skills and Power BI software. The impact of this resource planning and implementation can be seen in the corresponding decline instructional wages and expenses (Figure 9). Further refinements to schedule management remain focused on ensuring efficient consideration of resources while balancing curricular concerns.

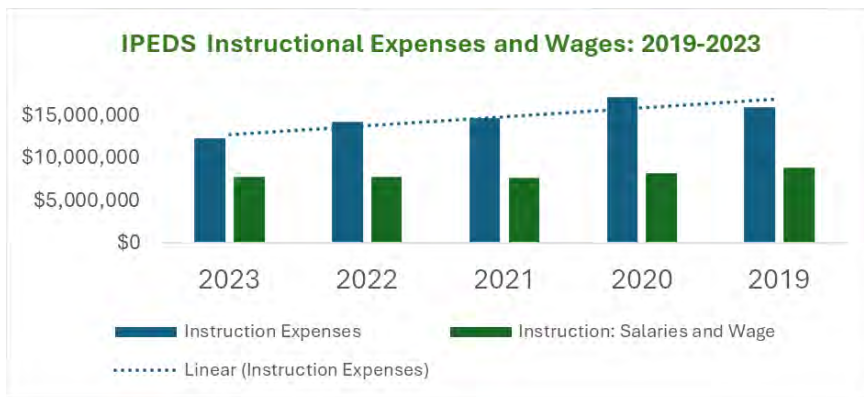


Figure 9: Instructional expenses and wages from 2019-2023 (Source: IPEDS).

In the last four years, several institutional level assessments have guided major resource decisions at the College. As an example, student focus groups and the strategic enrollment planning processes indicated a clear gap in student engagement in the enrollment pipeline. To address this gap, the College hired two FTE to implement Slate. These positions and software investments have become cornerstones of the College's enrollment management strategy and are strongly correlated with recent improvements in enrollment and retention. More broadly, the College has invested deliberately in technical skills within key offices to modernize the digital infrastructure. This increase in resources can be seen in the IPEDS human resources data that shows an increase in the relevant categories (Computer, Engineering, and Science from 14 to 18).

In cases where operational dollars have been limited, the College has utilized grant funding to hire key personnel or improve infrastructure. For example, rental of facilities to P-TECH has been used to generate revenue for improvements to classroom furniture. Grant monies have been used to hire faculty in several high-demand areas, such as construction and electrical technology, as well as visiting nanotechnology faculty member to support program development aligned with a regional labor market need.

The College's approach to applied learning also demonstrates this assessment-oriented approach. Responding to feedback from students and employers, the College deployed resources to support career development through Handshake, a job placement platform, expansion of applied learning and employer relations, and increased workforce development staffing to provide workshops, job fairs, online Brightspace modules, Career Champion training, and employment-focused programming (6.156);(6.157);(6.158); (6.159); (6.160). When the College significantly increased adult student enrollment in 2025-26, campus stakeholder feedback revealed the need for an Adult Learner Center. Students' use of the new Center will be examined regularly to determine ongoing resource and staffing needs.

In 2025-26, the College implemented an IPAE that outlines a comprehensive, cyclical process for planning, budgeting, and assessment (6.4);(6.9);(6.3);(6.41). One of the goals of this assessment ecosystem is to deepen the College's assessment culture to be more effective at carrying out systematic and sustained resource planning at the department level. Prior to the College's introduction of this integrated system, department plans (e.g. CollegeNow department plans) did demonstrate strategic planning with annual goals aligned to the College's Strategic Plan and Division plans like the SEP and APP, but these department goals were not well integrated with planning at all levels. The new Watermark system will improve assessment integration into annual planning at all levels. Supporting this process, budget managers have written assessable department goals for 2025-2026 (6.163). The office of institutional effectiveness and the

institutional effectiveness council will be supporting this work by providing feedback to help improve the quality of assessment, and to provide support to enhance institutional data literacy.

The approach to planning, budgeting, and resource allocation has been sustained, systematic, and appropriately resourced to support College functions. The 2021–22 Business Plan describes resource planning and utilization (6.16), while Foundation reports outline investments in scholarships, professional development, and asset management (6.164). Board of Trustees minutes include monthly Vice President of Finance budget reports demonstrating resource distribution oversight (6.165). Facilities and academic planning incorporate stakeholder feedback to improve space utilization (6.75).

Planning, resource allocation, and assessment processes are embedded in shared governance. The College Senate facilitates cross-unit dialogue on resource planning and assessment (6.166), and Campus Climate Surveys, conducted by DEAC and the Dean of Organizational Development and Institutional Effectiveness, assess student and staff experiences to inform institutional improvements (6.167);(6.168). Board of Trustees minutes, including those of the Board’s Budget and Finance Committee (6.169), reflect ongoing financial decision evaluation. The annual budget process remains data-driven and strategic. The APP (6.12) uses course and program enrollment data to guide academic planning and resource allocation.

Criterion 13. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, institutional renewal processes, and availability of resources

The College conducts an institutional renewal cycle every 3-5 years, engaging diverse campus stakeholders to review the Mission, Vision, and Values and to develop an updated Strategic Plan that informs division and department plans. This process occurred in 2019 and 2024-25, with the most recent cycle producing substantial changes to the College’s structure and assessment approach, emphasizing measurable objectives (6.170);(6.171).

The 2024-25 holistic assessment gathered stakeholder feedback through quantitative (Campus Climate Survey) and qualitative (World Cafe) methods. Following this data gathering, the College adopted a new MVV (6.39), a Strategic Plan with assessable pillars, and renewed institutional plans mapping to the Strategic Plan (including SEP, APP, FMP, Technology Master Plan). In 2024, the College established the Institutional Effectiveness Division with an associated shared governance Council to oversee assessment of shared priorities and development of unit plans, goals, and measures. This division implements rigorous assessment practices ensuring all departments participate in a standardized annual planning and assessment cycle (IPAE) that includes College Senate and other shared governance structures, as described in Standard VII (6.4).

In 2025-26, the College adopted Watermark planning software, enabling seamless integration of planning, budgeting, resource allocation, and assessment at department, division, and institutional levels (6.172). While prior budget cycles integrated division and department planning, assessment strategies varied and lacked seamless linkage with resource management. Planning and resource allocation now integrate through the College’s unit planning cycle. For examples, the APP (6.12) and SEP (6.46) each map to Strategic Plan directions and to resources and department goals in Watermark. The 2025 APP incorporated a Hanover consultant report identifying strategic directions for academic programming based on New York State job outlook and credential requirements, with priorities funded accordingly.

The SEP implementation exemplifies the College's longitudinal approach to planning, budgeting, and assessment. The 2019 Strategic Plan identified the need for strategic enrollment management (Strategy 4.2) (6.108), leading to the 2020-22 SEP (6.26). The 2021-22 Business plan identified Slate CRM as a tool to improve processes and increase enrollment (6.16); Slate was implemented in fiscal year 2021-22 (6.173), enhanced by hiring a Slate captain in 2023-24 to improve efficiency (6.174) and fully integrate Slate with PowerCampus in 2024-25 (6.175). Consequently, year-over-year enrollment increased substantially (6.15). This process exemplifies the institutional approach to planning, resource allocation, and assessment supporting institutional goals and Strategic Plan implementation.

Board of Trustees minutes document discussions on budgeting, planning, and resource use (6.176). The Board's Finance and Audit Committee, including Board and College staff representatives, meets six times a year to discuss student fees, capital projects, and fund balance use for shortfalls (6.169). College Senate agendas reflect faculty and staff engagement in planning, assessment, and resource allocation, including policy and program approval (6.177);(6.166).

Consultant and taskforce reports—including World Café, RMS analysis, family housing feasibility study, and enrollment campaign evaluations—provide planning and assessment insight (6.178);(6.179);(6.180); (6.181);(6.182);(6.6);(6.183). To address the declining residential student population, the College commissioned a feasibility study for alternative uses of underutilized dormitory buildings, such as family housing (6.184). Study results informed the TC3 Foundation's decision to sell several residence halls (6.185).

ALIGNMENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

Institutional Priority	Alignment Narrative	Representative Evidence
Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility	The College's planning infrastructure ensures that enrollment management, academic programming, and student support decisions are driven by student outcome data. The Strategic Enrollment Plan, developed through an inclusive constituent process, has produced year-over-year enrollment increases and improved retention. The 2025–2028 Academic Primary Plan prioritizes program portfolio review tied to career and transfer outcomes, and participation in Achieving the Dream and SUNY Academic Momentum reflects a commitment to using disaggregated data to close equity gaps across all student populations.	(6.46) (6.12); (6.30); (6.41); (6.44)
Enhance institutional effectiveness, accountability, and transparency for responsible stewardship of resources	The establishment of the Institutional Effectiveness Division, the Institutional Effectiveness Council, and the Institutional Planning and Assessment Ecosystem create a unified, transparent framework connecting goal setting, assessment, and resource allocation across all divisions. Zero-based budgeting, implemented in 2025–2026, requires budget managers to explicitly link all requests to strategic priorities. Regular reporting to the Board of Trustees, College Senate, and campus community through enrollment tracking reports, BOT finance presentations, and the annual Fall Day meeting ensures institutional performance data is broadly accessible to all stakeholders.	(6.4); (6.119); (6.20); (6.43); (6.35); (6.45), SUNY Academic Momentum Plan, Achieving the Dream Action Plan, Strategic Enrollment Plan

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The College demonstrates a sustained, mission-aligned approach to institutional planning and resource allocation that has grown meaningfully in rigor and integration since the 2018 self-study. Through the Institutional Planning and Assessment Ecosystem, the College has moved from fragmented, difficult-to-

assess planning documents toward a unified framework in which strategic goals, unit-level planning, assessment, and budgeting are systematically connected across all divisions. This evolution reflects an incremental improvement arc spanning seven years of structural investment, cultural change, and honest self-assessment.

The College's financial practices reflect a sustained commitment to accountability and transparency. Participatory budgeting processes, regular independent audits, and the adoption of zero-based budgeting in 2025–2026 ensure that resource allocation decisions are grounded in institutional priorities and subject to shared governance oversight. Strategic decisions that include right-sizing operations, closing underutilized facilities, and expanding student support services demonstrate a willingness to make difficult, data-informed choices in service of long-term institutional health.

Assessment is embedded throughout institutional processes, with internal data, stakeholder feedback, and national benchmarking informing continuous improvement. The College's 2025 membership in ATD represents a significant deepening of this commitment: through ATD's structured framework, the College is strengthening its use of disaggregated student outcome data to identify and close equity gaps, connecting planning and assessment practices directly to the students most in need of support. This work builds on the guided pathways foundation established in prior years and extends it with greater analytical rigor and intentionality.

The College acknowledges that important work remains, and with new leadership in Finance, it will be implementing a multi-year financial plan. Assessment cycles within the new ecosystem are in their first full year of implementation, and the College continues to strengthen practices for closing the loop between assessment findings and institutional action. These are not failures of ambition but evidence of a planning culture that is honest about where it is in its development and committed to continuous improvement.

The College's planning culture is characterized by transparency, inclusivity, and a focus on institutional effectiveness and student success – the self-study's institutional priorities associated with this standard. These values are reflected not only in what the College has built, but in how it has built it, through the participation of faculty, staff, students, and community members in consequential decisions about institutional direction.

Strengths

- Mission-aligned and data-informed planning using the Institutional Planning and Assessment Ecosystem, with a systematic planning approach across all five divisions
- Optimization of resources, including efforts to right-size the college and strategic use of technology and outsourcing.
- Improved fund balance over the past 4 years and a focus on developing balanced budgets through right-sizing the organization.

Areas for Improvement

- While the College ties planning to annual budget cycles, a multi-year budget will support strategic stability, long-term planning alignment, and reduce administrative time spent on annual cycles.
- Data literacy skills – both using assessments and understanding the ways that data-informed decision-making is already resulting in positive change – vary within non-academic departments.

Recommendations

- Integrate a multi-year budget cycle within the Institutional Planning and Assessment Ecosystem, while still maintaining operational flexibility to address environmental challenges.
- Implement a plan for regular, progressive professional development to support non-academic department managers in meaningful assessment, both increasing confidence, addressing gaps and celebrating successes.

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

Table 1. Standard 7 alignment with institutional priorities and strategic directions

Category	Alignment
Primary Institutional Priorities	• Create a caring, equitable, and engaged campus community • Enhance institutional effectiveness, accountability, and transparency for responsible stewardship of resources
Strategic Directions Aligned	• Accountability & Transparency
Focus of the Standard	Integrated planning, budgeting, assessment, financial sustainability, facilities, technology, and continuous institutional improvement

INTRODUCTION

Tompkins Cortland Community College has a defined governance structure led formally by the Board of Trustees and Chief Executive Officer, given the title of President, with several advisory bodies allowing for Shared Governance across the College. The current advisory structure consists of a series of College Councils, the Student Government Association (SGA), and the College Senate, whose charge comes from and who report directly to the executive branch of the College ([7.1](#)). This diversity of shared governance bodies allows all areas of the College to be represented, supporting accountability and transparency within the College, thus strengthening the responsible stewardship of resources and sense of belonging to a caring community through inclusive decision-making. By not limiting shared governance to a couple of formal decision-making bodies, the College community provides varied opportunities to engage, understand, and inform decision-making to ensure that those decisions align with TC3's student-centered Mission, Vision, and Values.

Since the last Self-Study, the College has made improvements to shared governance operations of the College Senate, the Curriculum Committee, the SGA, the Executive Council, and the President's Cabinet, among other bodies. It has adjusted positions and responsibilities within the administrative structure in response to the challenges faced by and needs of the College, while also making the organizational structure more transparent to employees ([7.2](#)). The President has taken an active role in improving the College Senate, increasing transparency and information sharing within the institution, and leading improvements to Board of Trustee policies related to self-assessment and oversight of College finances.

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

Criterion 1. A clearly articulated and transparent governance structure that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for inclusive decision making by each constituency, including the institution's legally constituted governing body, administration, faculty, staff, and students, as well as any related entities.

At the College, shared governance includes all the processes and groups through which different parties on campus are represented in the decision-making process, through decision-making itself, in an advisory and oversight role, and/or via formal recommendations. There are four avenues through which shared governance occurs at TC3: 1) the Board of Trustees; 2) the College Senate; 3) the Student Government Association (SGA); and 4) College Councils, including the Curriculum Committee, the Diversity and Equity Action Council (DEAC), the Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC), the Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP) Council, and the President's Cabinet. (Despite their names, the Curriculum Committee and the President's Cabinet are definitionally "Councils" within the current shared governance structure.)([7.3](#)). The Board of Trustees, as TC3's legally constituted governance body, is described in sub criterion 2.b. Membership, charge, and meeting information for each shared governance group is available on the College website (<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/college-info/college-councils-and-committees>).

College Senate

The College Senate advises the Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer on matters of policy. Senate membership consists of voting representatives from each area of the College including Faculty, Administrative Staff, Classified Staff, Faculty Student Association, Adjuncts, and the Student Body ([7.1](#)). The membership does not include members of the Executive Staff, though there is a non-voting liaison designee of the President who attends to provide updates. This wide range of membership allows for a broad expanse of knowledge and experience from across the College to give feedback and advice on policies. Significant changes to academic programs and policies, such as the approval of new programs, changes to institutional learning outcomes, discontinuation of degree programs, and changes to academic policies, also go through the Senate, after being considered by the Curriculum Committee and Faculty; in these cases, the vote results and feedback of both the Senate and Faculty are presented to the Board.

Senate meetings are open for all members of the College community to attend. Agendas and minutes are emailed to the campus community and are available via the College website. Each council is required to report to the Senate each year. In addition, the Vice Presidents responsible for each of the institutional strategic plans provide annual updates in Senate meetings. The Chair(s) of the Senate hold regular meetings with the Chief Executive Officer to maintain communication between the Senate and Executive Council. The Senate Chair presents a monthly report to the Board and attends Board meetings.

The Senate is in a continuous state of self-assessment and improvement. A review of the bylaws takes place regularly during Senate meetings, allowing for feedback on what is working and where there may be room for improvement. Over the last year, this has manifested in working meetings to go over specific articles of the bylaws ([7.4](#)). Changes to the bylaws require a campus-wide vote ([7.1](#)).

Student Government Association (SGA)

The SGA "serves as the voice of the student body to create a better campus community for the students, by the students" ([7.17](#)). In terms of its role in shared governance at the College, the SGA "assist[s] with the selection of student representatives to a variety of campus Councils and committees," including the Faculty Student Association (FSA), the FSA Finance Committee, the Food Advisory Committee, the Student Activities Office, the College Senate, SEP Council, and DEAC, ensuring that the student voice is represented in decision-making. Responding to concerns in the prior self-study that student seats on the College Senate and some Councils went unfilled, the SGA adjusted its structure to ensure consistent student representation. SGA officers meet with the College President monthly, and the SGA works with the Office of

the President and the Student Activities Office to elect the voting student member of the Board of Trustees who also serves as an ex-officio member of the SGA (7.17).

The SGA is the forum commonly used by other campus groups, administrators, faculty, and committees to inform the student body about, and discuss, campus issues, including the Middle States Self-Study (7.18) the Campus Security Committee (7.19), and potential changes to tutoring services. Importantly, these forums provide an opportunity for feedback and input into decisions; for example, when re-designing the College brand, the Director of Strategic Marketing worked closely with the SGA for a student perspective.

SGA membership is open to “any currently enrolled, TC3 student who has paid an activity fee... [who] attend[s] at least 3 general SGA assembly meetings in a 31 day period not to include holidays and school breaks...[,] attend[s] at least 3 committee meetings in the same 31 day period,” and joins at least one committee “as a regular participating member” (7.17). The SGA Executive Board includes the President, Vice President of Finance/Treasurer, Vice President of Communications, Vice President of Student Services, two Vice Presidents of Student Involvement, Vice President of Diversity Equity and Inclusion, and one Senator-At-Large (7.17).

College Councils

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee is charged “with the consideration of all proposals for additions or changes to the curriculum of the College[,]... [the] responsib[ility] for ensuring that all curriculum follow the requirements for the College, the State University of New York (SUNY), the New York State Department of Education (NYSED), and the College’s accrediting body, the Middle States Commission of Higher Education (MSCHE), and other relevant accrediting bodies based on current program offerings[, and]... [the support of] faculty with curriculum development and revisions and in guiding the direction of the College’s academic offerings” (7.5). The Curriculum Committee works in collaboration with the College Senate on Level 3 curricular changes (changes that have a “broad impact” on the College, such as adding programs) and with the Academic Assessment Committee on the development of Student and Program Learning Outcomes.

Membership includes seven voting and three non-voting ex-officio members. As curriculum is the purview of faculty, the voting members are all faculty: one full-time faculty representative from each of the five Academic Communities, one Librarian, and one Academic Professional Faculty. Each of these seven members has an alternate from within their campus group or position who can serve on the Committee if necessary. The three ex-officio members include the Curriculum Committee Chair, the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs or their designee, and the administrative assistant to the Provost’s Office (7.5). Prior to Spring 2025, the Registrar served as the Committee Chair. Then, during a review of its structure, the Curriculum Committee determined that it was important to maintain faculty control over its agenda and curriculum process, amending its bylaws to require that the Chair be a full-time faculty member voted into the position (7.6).

Diversity and Equity Action Council (DEAC)

DEAC serves the purpose of “support[ing] the College President and Board of Trustees in efforts to reduce barriers to success among the College’s population... [by] collect[ing], analyz[ing], and disseminat[ing] data related to diversity and equity issues at the College, identify[ing] goals for improving the campus climate,

develop[ing] and conduct[ing] professional development related to diversity and equity, and disseminat[ing] [its] data-driven approach to inclusion and social justice via strategic marketing initiatives” (7.7). DEAC is responsible for developing, and monitoring KPIs for, the College’s Equity, Diversity, Justice, and Inclusion (EDJI) institutional plan. The President develops DEAC’s annual charges based upon results of the Campus Climate Survey and Strategic Plan. The College’s Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), who serves as Chair of DEAC, meets monthly with the President and makes regular reports on behalf of DEAC to the Board of Trustees and the College Senate.

DEAC membership consists of representation from across campus. Besides the CDO, required members include the Assistant Diversity Officer (who serves as Vice Chair), a Human Resources representative, and the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services. Additional members are recommended by the DEAC Chair and then appointed by the President and include at least two each from the student body (the SGA’s Vice President of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and a resident student or Resident Advisor), Faculty Student Association (FSA) staff, administration, classified staff, full-time faculty members (at least two from the teaching faculty), and adjunct faculty.

Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC)

The IEC “oversee[s] and support[s] the regular, systematic and comprehensive assessment of the College’s operations, academic and non-academic units in fulfilling the College’s Mission and... strive[s] towards academic and operational excellence to help support student success” (7.8). The IEC oversees the College’s integrated planning framework, including setting appropriate student success metrics based on peer benchmarking, ATD, and SUNY AcMo. Furthermore, the IEC provides training and feedback to department managers regarding the alignment of department goals with the strategic plan and alignment of the assessments with the goals. The Council has three subcommittees – a Data Governance Committee focused on the quality and management of student data, an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Taskforce to make recommendations for AI policies, and a Survey Review Committee that reviews all human subject research conducted at or by a member of the College. The Survey Review Committee’s structure is currently being assessed considering the recent formation of the new Institutional Effectiveness Division and Council.

The IEC is co-chaired by the Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness or designee and a faculty or administrator recommended by their area Vice President. In addition to the co-chairs, Council membership consists of the Chair of the Academic Assessment Committee, a representative from the Finance Office, an Academic Department Chair, two directors from the Division of Enrollment Management & Student Affairs, and one director from the Division of Administration (7.8).

Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP) Council

The (SEP) Council serves as the primary advisory body on matters associated with Strategic Enrollment Management and is “charged with developing, implementing, and assessing a comprehensive and integrated strategic enrollment management framework and plan that aligns with the College’s strategic goals, mission, vision, and values” (7.9). The SEP Council meets monthly and is responsible for investigating and analyzing data, policies, processes, and procedures related to student recruitment, retention, and “the entire student life cycle.” It holds Enrollment Summits for the College community and provides an annual report and recommendations to the President, Executive Council, and Board of Trustees.

The SEP Council is chaired by the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Its membership consists of personnel from Admissions & Recruitment, Tutoring & Accommodation Services,

full-time faculty, CollegeNow, Health & Wellness Services, Athletics & Recreation, the Comptroller's Office, Strategic Marketing, Institutional Effectiveness, Technology Support, Continuing Education & Workforce Development, and the Student Government Association (7.9).

In May 2025, the SEP provided a draft plan (7.10) to the campus community, including the College Senate, DEAC, President's Cabinet, and Board of Trustees, based on information gathered from a campus-wide survey, feedback from external partners, student focus groups, external stakeholder roundtable discussions, the student and employee (Climate Survey, the IPEDS Comparative Survey, and the SUNY Student Satisfaction Survey (7.11).

President's Cabinet

In August 2022, the College President re-established the Executive Council for the purpose of "further strengthening communication, coordination and collaboration across the College" (7.12). The Council name was changed from the Executive Council to the President's Cabinet (7.13). By 2024, the President's Cabinet grew to almost 40 members, with representatives from every administrative department and academic community (7.14). While this broad base of membership was meant to facilitate information sharing, a survey of the group (7.15) revealed that members wished for more substantive discussion across departments. This led to a reduction in membership in 2025-26 to allow for more focused meetings, while still ensuring representation from each Division to gain diverse perspectives.

The 2025-26 membership of the President's Cabinet consists of leaders emphasizing "cross-departmental coordination, joint problem solving, horizontal/vertical communication and professional development informed by a broad range of perspectives" (7.16). This includes representatives from Academic Affairs, Campus Technology, Enrollment Management, Workforce Development, Campus Police, Facilities, the TC3 Foundation, Tutoring & Accommodation Services, Finance, Human Resources and Administration, Institutional Effectiveness, the President's Office, Student Affairs, and the College Senate as well as a faculty academic department chair representative, and a faculty community coordinator representative.

Criterion 2. A legally constituted governing body that meets subcriteria 2a-k.

The Board of Trustees (Board) is the legally constituted governing body of the College tasked with the fulfillment of the College's mission and goals, including fiduciary responsibility for the College, and ultimate accountability for academic quality, integrity, planning, and fiscal well-being of the College. Article II, Section 1 of the Board's bylaws clearly state the Board's responsibilities, including but not limited to, the appointment and assessment of the College President, the approval of curricula, budgets, tuition and fees, the development and maintenance of long- and short-range institutional planning, and establishing governing and other policies for the College (7.20) (Article II). Board bylaws also define policies related to other Board activities and functions, including but not limited to its composition, quorum, rules of order, officers, and committees (7.20). These bylaws were reviewed by the College President and a Board member in the spring of 2025, and the Board reviewed their recommendations and ratified revised bylaws at its July 2025 meeting (7.21). Some changes from the previous bylaws (7.22) include, but are not limited to, the addition of provisions regarding video conferencing for Board members (7.23) (Article II), the addition of language permitting the Board to appoint "an Acting President, Administrator in Charge or other title appropriate to the role to function as the president" (7.20) (Article III) rather than simply an "Acting President" (7.24) (Article III), and cleaning up and simplifying language (7.20) (Article V). The most

substantial change is the addition of Board Roles and Responsibilities. While this includes some of the specific duties and responsibilities established in individual bylaws, this section at the end of the document is adapted from Smith & Rutledge's (2020) Trusteeship in Community Colleges and provides more narrative explanations related to: a) Act[ing] as a unit, b) Representing[ing] the common good, c) Set[ting] the College's strategic direction, d) Employ[ing], evalu[ating], and support[ing] the CEO, e) Defin[ing] standards for College operations, f) Monitor[ing] institutional performance, g) Support[ing] and[ing] advocates for the College, h) Lead[ing] as a thoughtful, educated team, and i) Uphold[ing] all statutory responsibilities ([7.20](#)) (Board Roles and Responsibilities).

The Board consists of ten voting members ([7.25](#)). No members of the Board are employed by or otherwise renumarated by the College. Four trustees are appointed by the Governor of New York State (two residents from each of the College's two sponsoring counties), five are appointed by the sponsoring counties (two by the Cortland County Legislature and three by the Tompkins County Legislature), and one student trustee is elected by the student body pursuant to New York State education law and regulations ([7.20](#)) (Article II). This distribution provides for diversity in perspectives for the Board – across and within the two sponsoring counties and includes a student perspective while also providing multiple channels of communication to stakeholders in the counties and wider community. The names and brief biographies of Board members are publicly available on the College website (<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/college-info/board-trustees>).

The trustees elect the Board Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer while the Clerk and Deputy Clerk are appointed by the Chairperson. To affirm compliance with the Board bylaws' Conflict of Interest Policy ([7.20](#)) (Article II), trustees annually submit both a Conflict of Interest Certification and Disclosure of Interest Statement to the Board Clerk ([7.26](#)).

The Board holds regular meetings eleven months a year, from September to July, and holds an annual retreat in August. Meeting agendas are drafted by the College President in consultation with the Board's officers. During the July meeting, the Board elects a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer. Each spring, a self-assessment is distributed to the Board, the results of which are discussed at the annual retreat. At the 2024 retreat, the Board reviewed the President's proposed goals for 2024-2025 which focused on enrollment and retention, resources, and relationships, engagement, and collaboration on campus and within the larger community, discussed the Board's 2023-2024 self-evaluation, began a conversation about the relationship between the College and the TC3 Foundation, and examined the Board's role in the College's strategic planning process ([7.27](#)). The Board approved 2025-2026 goals at the 2025 retreat, and the President regularly provides updates on College progress toward achieving those goals at Board meetings ([7.28](#)).

The Board's 2023-2024 self-assessment identified seven key areas for additional progress and from these approved four "alignment areas" to prioritize in 2024-2025. These included (1) policy review and evaluation, (2) strategic planning and assessment, (3) the Board structure, and (4) issues related to the TC3 Foundation. In a November 18, 2024 memo to the Board, the College President provided a summary on the substantial progress achieved in each area, including but not limited to the appointment of a Chief Policy & Compliance Officer, revision of specific College policies and the addition of new ones, and the plan to present a Comprehensive Policy Manual to the Board (area one), development of the 2025-2028 College Strategic Plan, the updating of the College mission, vision, and values, the establishment of a new position of Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness (area two), the establishment of a Board Finance and Audit Committee, the implementation of a new annual Conflict of Interest disclosure for Board members ([7.26](#)), the appointment

of a Board subcommittee for the review of Board Bylaws (area 3), and the establishment and strengthening of ties between the Board and the TC3 Foundation through a joint retreat, the appointment of a liaison between the Board and the Foundation, and reviewing and updating the Memorandum of Understanding between the College and the Foundation to be finalized in January 2026 (area 4) (7.29). To stay current in best practices, the Board Chair and other members attend professional development sponsored by the New York Community College Trustees organization.

While the Board is charged with the control and direction of all of “the affairs, property, business, and policies of the College,” its primary focus is establishing policies regarding the governing of the College (7.30) and delegates the responsibility for administering and executing those policies to the College President (7.20) (Article II), keeping its members removed from the day-to-day operations of the College. The President and all Vice Presidents, in turn, provide monthly reports. For example, during the May 14, 2025 meeting of the Board of Trustees, the President discussed the integration and reorganization of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs while the Provost & Vice President of Academic Affairs proposed deactivation of the College’s Culinary Arts A.A.S. degree program (7.31) for Board approval. Board meeting agendas, each of which includes the minutes of the previous meeting, are made available on the College’s website (<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/college-info/board-trustees>). The College Senate and DEAC provide regular reports to the Board as well.

The Board is extensively involved in the financial management of the College. The Board Treasurer reviews major expenditures and provides monthly reports to the full Board during its meetings. The Board conducts a budget hearing the month prior to the approval of the College budget, at which time trustees ask for any necessary clarifications or explanations and suggest changes. Board members also participate in budget presentations to the governmental bodies of two sponsoring counties, participate in lobbying of government officials, and provide personal financial contributions to the TC3 Foundation’s fundraising initiatives and endeavors.

The Board maintains an Executive Committee composed of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and one other Board member and has responsibilities which include but are not limited to, professional development of the Board, onboarding new trustees, Board-President relations including advising the President, collective bargaining, promotions and tenure, resource development, and other actions as authorized by the Board (7.20) (Article IV). As a result of its discussion of its 2023-2024 self-evaluation at its 2024 retreat, the Board established a Finance and Audit Committee to provide additional clarity on the College’s finances and to “strengthen [the Board’s] ability to fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities” (7.27). The committee’s membership includes the Board’s Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer (7.32). The committee provides monthly reports during Board meetings as part of the Treasurer/CFO report. Finance and Audit Committee meeting agendas, each of which includes the minutes of the previous meeting, are made available on the College’s website (<https://www.tompkinscortland.edu/college-info/board-trustees>).

Criterion 3. A candidate or accredited institution possesses and demonstrates... [a] Chief Executive Officer that meets subcriteria 3a-d.

The Chief Executive Officer of TC3 is the College President, who is appointed by, evaluated by, and reports to the Board of Trustees (7.20) (Article V). The President does not sit on the Board nor serve as its chair (7.33).

Upon the resignation of President Montague in August 2021, per its bylaws (7.20) (Article III), the Board appointed then-Provost & Vice President of Academic Affairs Reifenheiser to serve as Administrator in Charge while the College conducted a search to fill the President position (7.31). Following a nationwide search, and with the approval of SUNY's Board of Trustees, the Board appointed Dr. Amy Kremenek to serve as the fifth President of the College on February 24, 2022 (7.34). President Kremenek's credentials and professional experience were extensively reviewed in the search process and were determined to be appropriate to and consistent with the mission of the College and the expectations and requirements of the position (7.35).

The President's duties are stipulated in Board bylaws (7.20) (Article V). The Board delegates responsibility for the administration and execution of policies governing the College to the President (7.20) (Article II).

Criterion 4. An administration possessing or demonstrating subcriteria 4a-f.

In the past, finding accurate documentation of the organizational structure of the College and its administration was difficult, partly because it was located on SharePoint but also because it was not regularly updated to reflect changes. This issue has been addressed with the shift of payroll services to PayCor as an accurate organizational chart and directory is available there for all employees (7.36).

Members of the administration are hired or appointed based on a process in which candidates' qualifications are reviewed in relation to the requirements of the open position. For external hires, hiring committees made up of relevant campus groups and offices formally review application materials, select candidates for interview(s), and make final recommendations to the College President, to whom the Board has granted authority for personnel appointments and actions (7.37). For internal appointments, the President reviews the skills and qualifications of current administrative employees in conjunction with relevant members of the executive team. A comparison of the position requirements for executive-level administrators (7.38) and the curriculum vitae of the individuals currently serving in those positions (7.39) demonstrates that these processes result in administrators that have the necessary experience, skills, and credentials to serve in their individual roles at the College, to effectively assist and advise the President in their specific areas, and to contribute to the larger mission of the College.

The President is advised by the Executive Council, which includes the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Vice President of Finance, the Vice President of Administration, the Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, and the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. The Executive Council meets weekly. Additionally, members of the executive-level administration or their designees actively serve on a variety of groups on campus, including the Councils discussed above. Through this participation, administrators engage with representatives of other areas at the College, including faculty, staff, and students. One of the more important results of this is the communication of information, ideas, and concerns within the College. The President and members of the Executive Council also disseminate information to the College through email on a regular basis.

Each executive-level administrator completes an annual Management-Confidential Performance Evaluation (7.40) for the President in which they provide a self-evaluation reflecting on their successes and challenges in the previous year, describe the impact of their leadership on their most important progress during the year, describe their leadership style, and reflect on how the President can support them in their leadership role. They also identify three to five proposed goals for the upcoming year. The President responds with a

written performance evaluation in which she identifies “key priority areas for the upcoming year based on the strategic goals of the college and the priority of the senior leadership team.” This written evaluation is followed by an in-person meeting for further discussion of the self-evaluation, the performance evaluation, and goals for the upcoming year. Those administrators who directly report to one of the executive-level administrators complete a self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and dialogue process with their supervisor as detailed in Article 49 of the Professional Administrators Association Contract ([7.41](#)).

The President’s Cabinet completes an annual assessment of Cabinet meetings ([7.15](#)) to structure the form and content of next year’s meetings.

Criterion 5. Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration.

The College assesses the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration in a number of ways.

All shared governance bodies engage in a regular process of self-assessment to meet the needs of the College. The College Senate has been engaged in self-assessment related to its bylaws and clarifying its relationships with campus committees and councils, resulting in a bylaws revision in 2023 ([7.1](#)). The Curriculum Committee amended its bylaws in 2025 based on meetings it planned for the review of the curriculum development and approval process. DEAC bylaws are required to be reviewed every three years “or sooner if changes on campus require change” ([7.7](#)); the current bylaws were reviewed and updated in January 2025. The IEC and the SEP wrote their charges in 2025, and the IEC charge includes a requirement that the chair reviews it annually ([7.8](#)). The SGA last updated its constitution in 2024. As the College’s Chief Executive Officer, the President has taken an active role in the assessment of governance, leadership and administration. As discussed, the restructuring of the Executive Council and the President’s Cabinet occurred to address issues related to transparency and communication of information. The President has also been active in assisting the Board of Trustees in assessing its policies and practices and in making necessary changes, including those related to Board members’ self-assessment, the implementation of a new conflict of interest policy for Board members, the establishment of the Finance and Audit Committee, and a review of the Board bylaws.

With the guidance of members of the President’s Cabinet and Executive Council, the President has been actively assessing the structure of administrative units, making changes to facilitate more efficient use of College resources while maintaining student services. One example of this involved a change in the larger organizational structure of the College. Based on “careful consideration of the needs of the overall College, priorities for Student Affairs, [a] division assessment... completed in December [of 2024] and the current status of the College’s operating budget,” the President merged Enrollment Management and Student Affairs into a new division called Enrollment Management and Student Affairs led by the Vice President of Enrollment Management ([7.42](#)). As described in Standard IV and elsewhere, this merger brings coherence to the student experience from recruitment through completion through such developments as the Panther Welcome Center ([7.43](#)), Slate CRM for student communication and workflow automation (for both non-academic and academic departments), and alignment of student affairs services with retention efforts.

Additionally, executive-level administrators complete self-evaluations to the President in the process discussed above while the President submits a self-evaluation to the Board for review and feedback.

The College is engaged in a significant assessment-based change to its governance structure with the creation of a Faculty Senate. Currently, the faculty voice occurs through discussion and voting as a body of the whole (each full-time teaching and non-teaching faculty member has one vote), rather than having a smaller representative body make decisions on their behalf. In Spring 2025, four faculty members – the College’s Faculty Council of Community Colleges representative and a representative from the College Senate, the Faculty Association, and the academic community coordinators – formed an ad hoc group for the purpose of researching the structure of faculty senates at other colleges, writing a draft of Faculty Senate bylaws, and presenting that draft to faculty for feedback and eventual ratification (7.45). The ad hoc group presented their findings and a draft of bylaws to the faculty for comment early in Spring 2026 (7.46), making revisions based on that feedback that were distributed to faculty at the end of February 2026 (7.45). In the proposal, this Faculty Senate would serve as the primary shared governance body for faculty, with at least three committees under its charge: the Curriculum Committee, Academic Assessment Committee, and a Committee on Academic Status. Currently, the ad hoc group is using a second round of feedback to make revisions, with plans to prepare bylaws for a faculty vote by the end of Spring 2026, followed by presentation to the College Senate and President.

ALIGNMENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

Table 2. Standard-to-Institutional Priority Alignment.			
MSCHE Standard / Criterion	Institutional Priority	Alignment Narrative	Representative Evidence
Standard VII, Criteria 1, 4, 5	Create a caring, equitable, and engaged campus community	The College has engaged in efforts to reinforce existing avenues of transparency and communication and established new ones. It has made the organizational structure more accessible. The College has worked with the SGA to ensure student voting representation across shared governance bodies. The College Senate has worked to clarify its role and responsibilities, and the faculty has made progress towards a Faculty Senate. Efforts such as these have served to increase the dissemination of information across campus, the increase of avenues for staff, faculty, and student engagement, and contributed to a sense of campus community ownership of and connection to College activities and initiatives.	President’s Cabinet membership memos; College Senate Bylaws; College Councils and Committees page on College website; Faculty Senate Bylaws and Constitution draft
Standard VII, Criteria 1, 2	Enhance institutional effectiveness, accountability, and transparency for responsible stewardship of resources	College committees and councils provide employees and students with means of providing input and feedback on resource use, goals, and policies to ensure alignment with the MVV and student success. The SEP Council uses data to refine and improve processes related to resource use in student recruitment, retention, and success. The establishment of the IEC provides a central entity to organize and align the use of resources across all Divisions in alignment with the Strategic Plan and ATD. The Board of Trustees holds open monthly meetings and makes its meeting materials available on the College website.	Committee and council bylaws and charge documents; IEC Charge Document; SEP Charge; Board of Trustees agendas, minutes, and page on the College website.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the prior Self-Study, TC3 has made improvements to its governance, leadership, and administrative structure in line with identified areas of weakness, changing institutional needs, and shifts in the use of resources. While the College is still in the process of defining a new shared governance structure to represent the faculty voice, the College meets the requirements of this Standard. More importantly, the College's evaluation of these areas and its work towards improvements has been part of and consistent with its ongoing efforts to create a caring, equitable and engaged campus and to create and practice policies and practices related to responsible stewardship of the institution at all levels, two of its institutional priorities.

Strengths:

- Since the last Middle States Self-Study, the College has improved the transparency of its organizational structure helping improve accountability in decision-making.
- Supporting identity and belonging, the College has strengthened existing bodies and expanded opportunities for TC3 employees and students to have a voice through shared governance. Changes made by the College Senate and the Curriculum Committee have clarified those groups' organizational identities, improving their effectiveness. The process of creating a Faculty Senate has allowed faculty a voice in actively constructing a space within the larger context of shared governance. There has been an increase in active student involvement within the SGA, as well as other College groups, to ensure decisions include student perspectives.

Areas for Improvement:

- While the College has made great strides in self-assessment within governance, leadership, and administration, campus surveys could provide additional data to inform improvement.
- With the relatively recent and ongoing changes in the College's shared governance structure, including the likely creation of a Faculty Senate, greater clarity is needed regarding the responsibility of each shared governance entity for information-sharing to support both engagement and transparency.

Recommendations:

- Periodic campus-wide surveys should include questions to assess the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration.
- Develop clear guidance for each shared governance body regarding expectations and processes for the dissemination of meeting materials, annual reports, membership, etc. Coordinate recruitment for shared governance bodies to support broad representation across the campus community.

Appendix 1: Working Group Membership

WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Each Working Group is co-chaired by a member of the faculty and an administrator, both of whom have direct experience in aspects of the College that relate to the Standard. Working Group Co-Chairs selected members who have expertise directly relevant to the assigned Standard, with an effort to select people representing different perspectives and roles at the College. Each group is affiliated with at least one shared governance body or committee at the College whose work relates to the standard. To the extent possible, Working Group Chairs and members have experience with one of the affiliated shared-governance committees (e.g. College Senate, Curriculum Committee, Academic Assessment Committee, etc.). Each Working Group's membership is identified on the following pages.

Standard 1 Working Group: Mission and Goals

- a. Co-chairs: Faculty and Administrative members from the PEAKS Leadership and Strategic Planning groups. (The PEAKS Leadership group consists of alumni of a community college leadership consortium, which facilitated the College's yearlong Mission/Vision/Values drafting process.)
- b. Members:
 - i. Past or current member of the College Senate to address the use of Mission, Vision and Values in self-governance.
 - ii. Member of the Diversity, Equity, and Action Committee (DEAC) committee to address the diversity, equity and inclusion principles in Standard I.
- c. Affiliated with the following committees: DEAC, Institutional Effectiveness Council, College Senate, and Student Government Association (SGA).

Standard 1: Mission and Goals Working Group Membership		
Role	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Virginia Shank	Assistant Professor of English
Co-Chair	Carrie Whitmore	Director of Continuing Education and Workforce Development
Member	Kevin Caveney	Purchasing Agent
Member	Merryn Clay	Coordinator of Global Partnerships
Affiliated Committees: DEAC, Institutional Effectiveness Council, College Senate, SGA		

Standard 2 Working Group: Ethics and Integrity

- a. Co-chair: Chief Policy Officer, as this role connects to many areas relevant to the key ethics and integrity compliance issues in this standard. (Later replaced with the Senate Co-Chair.)
- b. Co-chair: Faculty member to help address academic freedom and intellectual property rights.
- c. Members:
 - i. Representation from the Financial Aid Office to address criteria 7 a. and b.

- ii. Representation from Marketing or Admissions to ensure the required disclosures are being appropriately shared with students and other stakeholders.
- iii. Representation from Student Affairs to address grievance policies.
- d. Affiliated with the following committees: College Senate, Executive Council.

Standard 2: Ethics and Integrity Working Group Membership		
Role	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Carolyn Boone	Chief Policy & Compliance Officer (former)
Co-Chair	Virginia Shank	Assistant Professor of English
Co-Chair	Eric Jenes	Librarian and Co-Chair of College Senate
Member	Sarah Dockstater	Interim Director of Financial Aid
Member	Zachery Snyder	Director of Strategic Marketing
Member	Barbara Thayer	Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs
Affiliated Committees: College Senate, Executive Council		

Standard 3 Working Group: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

- a. Co-chair: Faculty member with significant prior experience in curriculum development, applied learning, and program accreditation.
- b. Co-chair: The Associate Provost, as this role includes supervising College adjuncts and serving as the Provost Office liaison to the General Studies Advisory Committee and College Teaching Center.
- c. Members:
 - i. Faculty with significant teaching experience in teaching important gateway general education courses and/or significant online teaching experience.
 - ii. Representation from any of the following areas: Access and Equity, Library, Tutoring, Instructional Technology, College Teaching Center
- d. Affiliated with the following committees: Curriculum Committee, College Teaching Center (CTC) Board, and the Academic Assessment Committee

Standard 3: Design & Delivery of the Student Learning Experience Working Group Membership		
Role	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Fares Jnaid	Associate Professor of Engineering and Construction
Co-Chair	Anndrea Mathers	Associate Provost
Member	Breton Bienvenue	Instructional Designer
Member	Amber Gilewski	Professor of Psychology
Member	Karen Rachetta	Coordinator of Access & Equity Services
Affiliated Committees: Curriculum Committee, CTC Board, Academic Assessment Committee		

Standard 4 Working Group: Support of the Student Experience

- a. Co-chair: AVP for Student Affairs, as this role oversees many aspects that are covered in this standard, including athletics, health services, counseling, and student organizations.
- b. Co-chair: Faculty member with significant experience with advising and with multiple measures placement.
- c. Members: Representation from Academic Records, Career Services, Financial Aid, Student Affairs, and Student Success.
- d. Affiliated with the following committees: Student Government Association (SGA); Faculty Student Association (FSA) Board; Diversity, Equity, and Action Council (DEAC).

Standard 4: Support of the Student Experience Working Group Membership		
Role	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Darese Dosal	Associate Vice President of Student Affairs (former)
Co-Chair	Angela Palumbo	Associate Professor of Global ESL and English
Co-Chair	Cindy Whitney	Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Sociology
Member	Glenda Gross	Interim Director of Student Success Services (former)
Member	Jim Janke	Assistant Director of Financial Aid – Veterans Benefits Certifying Officer
Member	April Myles	Assistant Registrar (former)
Member	Dara Riegel	Assistant Director for Employer Relations and Experiential Learning
Member	Robert Palmieri	Vice President of Enrollment Management & Student Affairs
Affiliated Committees: SGA, FSA Board, DEAC		

Standard 5 Working Group: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

- a. Co-chair: Faculty member with significant experience working on the College's Assessment Committee
- b. Co-chair: Provost/VP of Academic Affairs, as this role provides experience with a significant part of the academic affairs operations at the College.
- c. Members:
 - i. Faculty involved with academic assessment processes.
 - ii. Faculty from a discipline that has discipline-specific accreditation requirements or with prior experience with discipline specific requirements OR Department Chairs with significant experience with program assessment.
- d. Affiliated with the following committees: Academic Assessment Committee and Curriculum Committee

Standard 5: Educational Effectiveness Assessment Working Group Membership		
Role	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Kerry Curran	Professor of English
Co-Chair	Aaron Tolbert	Provost & VP of Academic Affairs
Member	Christopher Farrell	Instructor of English
Member	Kelly Murray	Instructor of Biology
Member	Eric Sambolec	Professor of Psychology

Standard 6 Working Group: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

- a. Co-chair: Faculty member with significant experience in assessment and program accreditation.)
- b. Co-chair: Comptroller, as this role oversees department budgeting processes.
- c. Members:
 - i. Representation from the College Senate, Strategic Planning, or Institutional Effectiveness committees
- d. Affiliated with the following committees: College Senate and Institutional Effectiveness Council

Standard 6: Planning, Resources, & Institutional Improvement Working Group Membership		
Role	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Sue Mueller	Associate Professor of Nursing
Co-Chair	Kori Post	Comptroller
Member	Sierra Brock	Administrative Assistant in Academic Affairs
Member	Michelle Nightingale	Dean of Organizational Development and Institutional Effectiveness
Affiliated Committees: Institutional Effectiveness Council, College Senate		

Standard 7 Working Group: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

- a. Co-chairs: Faculty and administrative members with experience in the College's shared governance committees
- b. Members:
 - i. Secretary to the Board of Trustees (BOT)
 - ii. Staff or Faculty with experience on any of the shared governance committees, including the College Senate or Curriculum Committee
- c. Affiliated with the following committees: College Senate, Board of Trustees (BOT), and Student Government Association (SGA)

Standard 7: Governance, Leadership and Administration Working Group Membership		
Role	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Travis Vande Berg	Professor of Sociology; Chair of Curriculum Committee
Co-Chair	Jonathan Walz-Koeppel	Interim Chief Information Officer/Lead Data Architect; Member of Institutional Effectiveness Council
Member	Aaron Decker	Associate Professor of English; member of Faculty Senate ad hoc group
Member	Amy Faben-Wade	Assistant Professor of Chemical Dependency Counseling; Co-Chair of College Senate
Member	Nancy Murphy	Assistant to the President; Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Affiliated Committees: Board of Trustees, College Senate, SGA		

Appendix 2: Reference Tables

Introduction References	
New Ref	Original citation
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0.2	20260422_all_org_charts.pdf
0.3	20260409_all_IPEDS Figures.pdf
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7.38	7_38_20250716_S7_4_Administration_Job_Position_Documents
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7.40	7_40_20250716_S7_4_2024_Management-Confidential_Eval_Memo
7.41	7_41_20251204_S7_4_PAA CBA 09_01_24-08_31_27

7.42	7_42__20250716_S7_4_OrganizationalStructureEmail2025-05-05
7.43	7_43__20260307_S7_5_February 19 2025 Board Packet
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