

# College of DuPage

HLC ID 1084

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STANDARD PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review

Review Date: 4/25/2022

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# Context and Nature of Review

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## Review Date

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4/25/2022

## Review Type:

Reaffirmation Review

## Scope of Review

- Reaffirmation Review
- Federal Compliance (if applicable)
- On-site Visit
- Multi-campus Visit (if applicable)
  
- 2021–22 COVID-19 Response Form

## Institutional Context

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A five-person HLC peer review team visited the College of DuPage (COD) on Monday and Tuesday, April 25-26, 2022. Covid protocols (proof of vaccination or recent negative test) were in effect and followed by the team as requested by the institution. The review was a Standard Pathway Year Four Mid-Cycle Review with an included interim report with emphasis on general education outcomes and co-curricular assessment. This review also includes reaffirmation due to the removal of Probation.

COD is the largest community college and the second-largest provider (after the University of Illinois) of public undergraduate education in the state of Illinois. COD serves residents in most of DuPage County, and parts of Cook and Will counties. COD's district includes over 50 communities, with a population of approximately 1 million people. COD's student body continues to become increasingly more diverse, with 27 percent Latinx, 8 percent Black, 11 percent Asian, and 46 percent white. COD's operating revenue is derived primarily from local taxes, tuition and fees, and state allocations.

The college has a state-of-the-art campus that includes 13 main buildings with almost two million square feet of space. COD also operates four strategically placed centers in Addison, Carol Stream, Naperville, and Westmont.

COD is governed by a Board of seven voting Trustees, elected from the district at large, and a non-voting Student Trustee elected by the student body.

As a comprehensive community college, COD meets five key community educational needs: Transfer Education, Career and Technical Education, Developmental Education, Continuing Education, and Business Training. COD grants seven degrees: Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Engineering Science, Associate in Applied Science, Associate in General Studies, Associate in Fine Arts in Art, and Associate in Fine Arts in Music. In addition, COD offers more than 160 certificates in over 70 areas of study. COD provides eight men's and seven women's NJCAA athletic teams with plans to add additional sports in the next few years.

## Interactions with Constituencies

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President
Academic Division Business Associate
Accounting Supervisor
Adjunct Faculty, Chemistry
Adjunct Faculty, Speech
Adjunct Faculty, Speech Communication
Admin Assistant to Provost
Admin Assistant, Academic Affairs
Admin Assistant, Employee Development Center
Admin Assistant, General Counsel
Admin Assistant, IT Services
Annual Giving Manager
Assistant Professor, English
Assistant Provost of Instruction
Assistant Provost of Student Affairs
Assoc Dean of Counseling, Advising, Transfer Services
Assoc Professor, English
Assoc Professor, Fashion Studies
Assoc Professor, Library
Assoc Professor, Nursing (2)
Assoc Professor, Office Technology Information
Assoc Professor, Political Science / Chair, Welfare
Assoc Professor, Psychology
Assoc Professor, Psychology / Chair, Instruction
Assoc Vice President, Economic Development, Dean Continuing Education
Associate Dean, Library
Associate Dean, Public Services
Associate Director Athletics
Associate Professor, English

Associate Professor, Library
Associate Professor, Psychology
Asst Manager, Center for Student Success
Asst Professor, Chair Physical Therapist Assistant program
Asst Professor, Computer and Information Technology
Asst Professor, Development English
Asst Professor, Physical Therapy Assistant program
Asst Professor, Political Science
Asst VP Economic Dev/Dean CE & Public Services
Budget Manager
Business Manager, MAC
Business Solutions-Senior Manager
Career Specialist
Chair, Architecture
Chair, Business
Chair, Electronics Technology
Chair, Human Services
Chair, HVACR
Chair, Motion Picture Television
Chair, Philosophy and Religions
Chair, Philosophy/Religious Studies
Chair, Psychology
Chair, Surgical Technology
Chair/Professor, Motion Picture/Television
Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer
College Archivist
Controller
Coord. Operations Outreach Tech Support
Coordinator of Accommodations
Coordinator of Articulation and Partnerships
Coordinator of Study Abroad
Coordinator, Articulation and Partnerships
Coordinator, Center for Student Success

Coordinator, Marketing
Coordinator, Math Assistance
Coordinator, Operations & Outreach Tech Support
Coordinator, Student Life
Coordinator, Student Life/Adjunct, Humanities
Coordinator, Study Abroad
Coordinator, Tutoring Services
Counselor
CTE Program Improvement Manager
Dean of Student Affairs
Dean, Arts/Communication/Hospitality
Dean, Business and Applied Technology
Dean, Liberal Arts
Dean, Nursing and Health Sciences
Dean, Science, Technology, Engineering, Math
Dean, Social & Behavioral Sciences
Dept Chair/Professor, Horticulture
Director of Athletics
Director of Human Services
Director, Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes
Director, Compliance/Internal Audit/Ethics Officer
Director, Facilities
Director, Human Resources
Director, Information Technology Services
Director, Legislative Relations and Spec. Asst. to the President
Director, MAC
Director, Marketing and Creative Services
Director, Pathways for Student Success
Director, Resource & Analytics
Division Chair, ACH / Assoc Professor, Speech Communication
Dual Credit Specialist
Employee Development Specialist
Faculty, Architecture

Faculty, Biology
Faculty, Culinary Arts
Faculty, Developmental English
Faculty, PE
Faculty, Psychology
Faculty/Chair, Eye Care
Fashion Studies Chair & Faculty
General Counsel
Grant Program Manager, Institutional Advancement
Honor Program, Professor, English
Horticulture Dept Chair, Professor
Instructional Asst, Learning Commons
Instructional Design, Facilitator
Instructional Designer
Instructional Technologist
Int Dean, Social/Behavioral Sciences
Interim Assistant Dean, Adjunct Faculty Support
Interim Assoc Vice President Partnerships and Learning Res
Interim Dean of Enrollment
Interim Dean Social/Behavioral Sciences
Interim Dean, Enrollment
Interim Manager, Admissions, Campus Central and Outreach
Interim Manager, Career Services
Interim Manager, Learning Support
Interim Manager, Registration
Interim, Assoc. Vice President Assessment & Student Success
Interim, Dean Social & Behavioral Sciences and Library
Internal Marketing & Communications Manager
Lab Software Supervisor
Learning Tech Specialist
Librarian
Library Asst
Manager of Academic Outreach

Manager of Access and Accommodations
Manager Student Diversity and Inclusion
Manager, Access and Accommodations
Manager, Accounting Operations & Financial Systems
Manager, Adjunct Faculty Support
Manager, Adult Education
Manager, Annual Giving and Alumni Relations
Manager, Communication and Events
Manager, Curriculum and Centralized Scheduling
Manager, Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment
Manager, Field Studies/Study Abroad
Manager, Fixed Assets/Construction/Facilities Ops Accountant
Manager, Institutional Advancement
Manager, Learning & Organizational Development
Manager, Learning Technology
Manager, Office and Classroom Technology
Manager, Student Diversity and Inclusion
Manager, Student Life
Manager, Student Support Services
Manager, Web Design
New Student Orientation Leader
Parent/Student
Professor, Architecture
Professor, Biology
Professor, Biology / College Curriculum Committee member
Professor, Business
Professor, Electronics Technology
Professor, Engineering
Professor, English (2)
Professor, Library
Professor, Nursing & Health Sciences
Professor, Political Science
Professor, Political Science / President, CODFA

Professor, Psychology
Professor, Spanish
Professor, Speech Communication / Dept Chairperson
Professor, Speech Communications
Professor/Librarian
Program Chair, Architecture
Program Development Manager
Program Manager, Adult and Youth Enrichment
Program of Study Alignment Coordinator
Program Support Specialist
Project Hire Ed. Manager
Provost
Reference Librarian
Registrar
Research Analysts (2)
Research Specialist
Senior Database Analyst
Senior Director-Stud Financial Asst, Veteran Services, Scholarships
Senior Manager, Business Solutions
Senior News Bureau and Community Engagement Manager
Senior Writer/Editor
Speech Instructor, Director of Forensics
STEM Division Chair
STEM Instructor
Student Athlete
Student Athletic Enrichment Coordinator
Student Leadership Council Officer
Student Life Events Specialist
Student Life Front Desk Specialist
Student Success Specialist
Student Trustee, Student
Student Worker, Student Life
Student Workers, Honors Program (2)
Students (7)



Supervisor, Centralized Scheduling
Supervisor, Greenhouse
Supervisor, Learning Commons
Supervisor, Library
Technical Services Librarian
Vice President for Administrative Affairs
Vice President of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Vice President, Human Resources
Vice President, Institutional Advancement
Vice President, Public Relations, Communications & Marketing

## **Additional Documents**

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In addition to the documents provided in this Assurance Argument, COD provided a list of Recurring College Surveys which is located in the Addendum.

# 1 - Mission

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

## 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

## Rating

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Met

## Rationale

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The College of DuPage's (COD) mission, vision, values, philosophy, and strategic plan were developed/updated through a year-long process that was collaborative and comprehensive across the college. The Strategic Long-Range Plan 2022-2026 was adopted by the Board in July 2020.

The COD mission, vision, values, and philosophy are current. The emphasis in these statements clearly describes the college's focus on serving the residents of its defined district. Access, diversity, affordability, and comprehensive education are significant points of focus.

COD's academic offerings, support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with the stated mission. The college is somewhat more diverse than its district. With a central location and satellite centers, accessibility is a significant strength.

While the actual mission statement is longer, staff, faculty, administration, and governing board members were able to articulate "student success" as their primary mission. The mission statement is prominent in the board room, on the website, and in similar locations across the college.

**Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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It was clear from the visit that the College of DuPage (COD) is solely dedicated to its educational purpose, not only through Illinois law, but also through its services, educational programming, and Strategic Long-Range Plan. The district is comprised primarily of DuPage County. Based on evidence such as financials, the college mission/vision/values, and the college website, it is clear that the College of DuPage fully supports its educational mission.

Through advisory boards, strong relationships with K-12 educational partners, law enforcement, fire protection, and local employers, it is clear that COD has very strong relationships with its constituents. As a community college, COD is clearly supporting the needs of its district to the best of its capacity and mission.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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The College of DuPage (COD) provides a significant number of curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities that help to prepare its students to thrive in today's globally connected world. These include service-learning opportunities, career services support, as well as field studies, and studies abroad. The general education outcomes include expression and expression of ideas, cultural and historical comprehension, and human behavior and societal knowledge.

COD is somewhat more diverse than its district and strives to provide an example of successful inclusion and equitable treatment of all students in order to exemplify these behaviors for the college district. Board policies provide an underpinning to ensure ethical and equitable behaviors.

Through its most recent strategic planning process, COD has strengthened its emphasis on diversity and equity. This was also clear from conversations with the college president, governing board members, and the diversity of the faculty, staff, and students who attended the open forum sessions.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

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

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

### **Rationale**

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It was abundantly clear to the visiting team that the College of DuPage strives to embody its stated mission: is to be a center for excellence in teaching, learning, and cultural experiences by providing accessible, affordable, and comprehensive education.

The college values have been updated to include Integrity, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, and Equity. College leadership has made great strides in ensuring its practices reflect these values across its operations.

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

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

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The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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College of DuPage (COD) operates in accordance with the Illinois Public Community College Act of 1965 (110 ILCS 805/). The Board of Trustees developed a process to adopt the mission, vision, philosophy, and other related statements and they engaged various constituencies, including a Shared Governance Council, in defining these statements as part of the development of the Strategic Long-Range Plan (SLRP). The SLRP is a central document on campus. It is readily available to all members of the campus community, and conversations during open forums affirmed that members of the campus community believed they had been appropriately engaged in its development. Board agendas and minutes prove that the Board of Trustees considers these documents and approves them. Board members demonstrated both their commitment to and knowledge of the college's mission during the site visit. In fact, the COD mission statement and value statement adorn the walls of the board's meeting room.

Policy 1.06 outlines the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees regarding the finances of the college, and the Board has set further policies and practices including establishing an Internal Auditor with the power of investigation. The auditor's role is to ensure the integrity of the college's financial position and to collaborate with a Board Audit Committee. In terms of financial integrity, COD represents itself clearly by making budget documents available and providing a Budget in Brief for easier public access and comprehension. The college has received an "Aaa" rating from Moody's Investment Services indicating that the college is financially stable with a strong reserve and a conservative approach to budgeting. Board members recognize their fiduciary responsibility and demonstrated knowledge of the budget in conversation with the site visitors. Likewise, the faculty and staff attending open criterion sessions demonstrated a robust understanding of the budgetary process.

In terms of Human Resources integrity, COD policies align with best practices. The college's

commitment to the recurring training of all members of faculty, staff, and board on issues of discrimination, sexual harassment, ethics, information security, active shooter awareness, and more is commendable. In conversations with staff and faculty, it was noted more than once that all employees are required to take a series of annual trainings that include developing an awareness of ethical behavior. An ethics hotline is available to faculty and staff and the number is posted across campus as well as on the internal intranet employee dashboard. Faculty and staff are encouraged to use this hotline if they have concerns about ethics violations.

COD adheres to Illinois state law in a number of areas, such as Policy 3.10's prohibition of discrimination and harassment and Policy 3.11's prohibition of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and relationship violence. The college's public documents, including the SLRP, focus on equity and inclusion thereby reflecting the college's value of *respect*, which states, "We expect courtesy and dignity in all interpersonal interactions." There are a number of guidebooks provided by COD as evidence outlining various human resources policies and procedures of the campus.

The college maintains policies to direct the academic activities of the campus from student accounts and advising to code of conduct and intellectual property rights. The academic policies stated in the College Policy Manual are robust, clear, and publicly articulated. The Provost Council is responsible for the integrity of the curriculum and academic program. An Academic Committee of the Board of Trustees reviews academic matters before they come to the full board to ensure any changes are aligned with the mission and needs of the community. Likewise, the auxiliary functions of the college appear to be stable and revenues are estimated to outpace expenditures according to the FY2022.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*



## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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The College of DuPage (COD) presents information critical to students and the public through the college catalog and website. Evidence was found for disclosure of the specific requirements, the tuition, and various fees that may apply in any given academic program. Admission requirements are clearly stated and resources are specifically aimed at different subgroups of students in a helpful manner, for example, traditional students, adult students, and health science students. Weblinks provided for registration and records, costs, scholarships and aid, student life and resources, and athletics all provide a clear representation of the college and its offerings. Graduation requirements for all programs are provided in detail via the college catalog, which is available online.

The “About Us” area of the website includes important information about the college, Board of Trustees, President, college leadership, and the accreditation relationship with HLC, including copies of previous HLC findings. Programmatic accreditations and related pass rates and degree information are provided on the individual programmatic web pages. Minutes and agendas for all Board of Trustee activities, including the Board's committee meetings, are available to the public in a transparent manner. The faculty along with their credentials are listed publicly via the college catalog and their office number and contact information can be found in a dedicated faculty directory. For adjunct faculty, a contact email address is provided.

COD provides a number of pieces of evidence to demonstrate its commitment to the community and a supportive campus climate. These include a 2019 Pulse Survey that examines the views of 500 college district residents on matters such as academic reputation, name recognition, the reputation of programs, and areas of strength and weakness. Likewise, the campus environment was measured in 2017 via PACE and Noel-Levitz SSI surveys. Both surveys show noted improvement in areas of concern, especially the PACE survey, which analyzes how employees view the college. The campus is currently administering a new PACE survey with results due in May 2022. The administration values the information garnered from these types of environmental scans and emphasized their intent to continue this practice. A schedule for all surveys was provided to the site visitors upon request.

As a community college, COD is not a research institution; however, the college does provide

service-learning opportunities to students in an effort to provide “crucial real-world experience” and to create well-rounded students. One example of this type of hands-on experience can be seen in the Hospitality and Tourism Management program in which students have access to a hotel simulation facility, the Inn at Water’s Edge. Here, students can host real guests overnight and receive training to better prepare them for the hospitality workforce. Likewise, the Homeland Security Training Institute provides an education center where students can put into practice the theory they are learning in five appropriate labs that include an immersive, urban street scene and a mock courtroom.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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The COD Board of Trustees has full authority over all aspects of college operations as authorized by the State of Illinois and acts autonomously in the interest of the college according to Policy 1.06, which outlines the "Authority, Powers, Duties, and Responsibilities of the Board." The elected Board of Trustees is required by the Illinois Public Community College Act to "complete a minimum of 4 hours of professional development leadership training covering topics that shall include, but are not limited to, open meetings law, community college and labor law, freedom of information law, contract law, ethics, sexual violence on campus, financial oversight and accountability, audits, and fiduciary responsibilities of a community college trustee during the first, third, and fifth year of his or her term." These requirements are reiterated in the COD Policy 1.15. Certifications were provided from the Illinois Community College Trustees Association demonstrating that each voting board member has completed the mandated leadership training.

The student member of the Board is exempt from these requirements as the student is non-voting. In addition to formal training, COD provides periodic board retreats to review more closely issues facing the college. New board members receive an orientation via activities with the president and via videos on key aspects of the college's operations and history. In a discussion with Board members, they indicated that they were satisfied with these training efforts and believed these activities prepared and assisted them in guiding the college. In addition, the Board members are active at the state and national levels. They take their responsibilities seriously and seek extra training opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills, especially in regard to their fiduciary responsibilities.

The college maintains the Board meeting agendas, minutes, packets, and some audio/video archives on the website. Meetings are also live-streamed for the public. Agenda topics include reports from the

president, academic committees, planning presentations, grants updates, financial statements, construction updates, and other items that are standard for a modern community college. The Board provides a public hearing of the annual budgets. Minutes demonstrate that meetings are also attended by “staff members, representatives of the press and visitors,” and the Board members confirmed that meetings are actively attended and often last for several hours. The activities of the Board, as reflected in the agendas, packets, and minutes of the Board meetings, show a significant level of involvement in the college’s operations and reflect the involvement of internal and external constituencies in the decision-making process. In addition, state law requires Board meetings to be open to the public and allow for public comment.

College Policy 3.02 addresses conflicts of interest for the Board and all employees of the college. All college personnel are called to “recognize and avoid circumstances” that may be considered a conflict of interest. Examples of conflicts are provided in this policy. Board members are required to disclose potential conflicts and to avoid voting on matters that may appear to be conflicts of interest. In addition, Policy 3.03 requires the disclosure of any economic interest that may conflict with the ethical operations of the college, which is outlined in the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act. These matters and determinations regarding conflicts are subject to the review of the campus Audit Committee. The duties of the president are clearly outlined in Policy 4.21 and the Board maintains oversight over the actions of the president through an annual evaluation process in accordance with Policy 4.22. Furthermore, the Board’s involvement in academic matters is clarified in the collective bargaining agreement made between the Board and the Faculty Association.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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The November 15, 2018 Board of Trustees minutes were provided as evidence of the college's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. The Board acted at that time to alter the college's philosophy statement to support diversity and to strengthen its commitment to freedom of expression. In addition, Policy 6.12 and section C2 of the current faculty contract provide evidence that academic freedom is protected on the campus. For example, the faculty contract section states, "Academic freedom shall be guaranteed to all Faculty Members and no arbitrary limitations shall be placed upon study, investigation, presentation, and interpretation of facts and ideas concerning humans, societies, the physical and biological world, and other branches of learning." While some concerns were expressed among faculty leadership about the nature of program development and implementation, these same leaders noted that the administration was engaged with them, was aware of their concerns, and that dialogue was ongoing. At no time was it indicated that the values of freedom of expression or academic freedom were being limited or infringed.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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Evidence demonstrating COD's pursuit of scholarly practice includes the use of an Institutional Review Board to ensure that what research does occur adheres to ethical principles. A sample IRB approval letter is provided in the evidence file to demonstrate the activity of the IRB. Meanwhile, the college's library staff have created a number of appropriate and relevant research guides for students in a variety of disciplines. These assist students in finding discipline-appropriate sources as well as providing guidance on how to use and cite sources.

The library's website has a link for students who wish to schedule an appointment with a dedicated research librarian as well as links for citing sources. The college also has "writing coaches" available to students, and the Assurance Argument notes that several thousand appointments are made annually. A visit to the library while on campus reinforced that the library staff is working to provide appropriate guidance to students. Through these activities, the college meets the accreditation expectations for encouraging the integrity of research and the ethical use of information.

College Policy 5.16 requires COD to maintain an academic code of conduct for the campus. This code of conduct is outlined in detail in the college's web-based catalog and in the Administrative Procedure Manual (Procedure No. 20-41). Academic conduct violations are defined and procedures for addressing such violations are outlined clearly. These procedures include guidance for everything from an informal resolution to formal action that includes a judicial hearing. Academic Conduct Violation Incident Reports are filed in accordance with this procedure and reviewed by the Dean of Students. The Assurance Argument provides adequate evidence that these policies are enforced, including a summation of the types of violations and the disciplinary actions taken. It is clear that COD takes academic conduct and ethical research seriously by the evidence provided and as reinforced in conversations had on the campus.

**Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

### Rationale

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College of Dupage (COD) operates in accordance with Illinois state law. Evidence indicates that the Board of Trustees is responsible for considering and adopting the mission, vision, and philosophy of the college. The Board engages the community and campus constituencies as it reexamines the college's position through the development of the Strategic Long-Range Plan (SLRP). The most recent version of the SLRP is well known and readily available across the campus. COD operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions as demonstrated by mandatory, annual ethics training in a number of areas and the availability of an ethics hotline. Legal counsel and internal auditing functions are available to the Board of Trustees to ensure compliance with college policy, state law, and federal law.

COD presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public through a robust website, in publications, and in the data it shares with various constituencies of the campus. In addition, as a very large campus, the administration uses a number of surveys to understand its position within the community, the needs of students, and the concerns of faculty and staff. Evidence from the visit demonstrates that COD supports the claims it makes about the educational experience students will receive. In addition, evidence found in college policy and affirmed in a visit with the Board of Trustees shows a clear commitment to understanding the Board's responsibilities to the college and to the campus. Board members are active, engaged, and commit a large amount of personal time in service to the campus. As per law, Board meetings are public and appear to be well attended.

In speaking with the Board of Trustees during the site visit, it was evident that past questionable actions by Board members and campus leaders weigh heavily on their minds. They are sincere in their efforts to guide the campus ethically. However, as the Board members' terms are six years with two board positions up for election on a rotating basis, the composition of the Board of Trustees changes regularly. While the current Board may be cautious in its approach to enduring ethical conduct, the future composition of the board is unknown. Thus, the college may consider more clearly institutionalizing ways to ensure the continued oversight of the board in a manner that prevents any conflicts of interest. This may include not just recusal from a vote but also recusal from any discussion when a conflict arises. In addition, it is apparent that the workload commitment of the Board of Trustees is very high, which may result in a loss of interest in service to COD in the future. The college leadership and Board members should be mindful of this strain and consider what truly needs Board approval or attention and what does not.

Finally, the Board members are elected to at-large positions from the whole district, which serves over one million residents (more than a congressional district). Board members disclosed that they are from the same sub-region of the district. If Illinois law allows, the college leadership and Board may want to consider ways to elect Board members from different precincts within the district. This may allow for better representation of other areas of the district, particularly from underrepresented populations thereby adding diversity.

No concerns were indicated during the site visit regarding limitations on freedom of expression or



academic freedom. In fact, it appears that the faculty have a great deal of leeway in their course offerings beyond what is typical for a community college catalog. A quick scan of the course catalog, for instance, found English courses in Poetry, Science Fiction, Children's Literature, and Native American Literature. Likewise, history courses revealed options in the study of Chicago, Asia, Russia, Japan, and numerous other highly specialized areas that are more typically left to majors taking junior- and senior-level courses. The same can be found in any number of disciplines. The college promotes its effort to institute the Guided Pathways initiative as a means of ensuring that students are transferring to four-year institutions without unnecessary credit, but these offerings would appear to run contrary to that effort. While it is commendable that the faculty are making efforts to provide diverse offerings to students, it may be in the faculty's best interest to research the transferability of these types of courses and to ensure that students are being appropriately served. It may also be appropriate to decrease the number of courses offered and to dedicate the focus on a core of transferable courses.

Finally, it is clear from the policies and procedures and the evidence found during the site visit that COD faculty, staff, and administrators value academic integrity and honesty. They strive to provide students with everything necessary to be successful in an academic environment. The resources available to students, especially the library and wrap-around tutoring and support services, are impressive. The faculty and staff that were engaged during the site visit are proud of the college and seek to serve students as they pursue their academic interests.

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

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

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

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The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

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

### **Rating**

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Met

### **Rationale**

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The College of DuPage (COD) has a process for approving and updating courses and programs. Division and college curriculum committees of the college review proposals for new and updated courses and programs submitted by faculty before they are forwarded to the Board of Trustees. The Board reviews and approves programs as the final institutional action. For example, during interactions with the Board of Trustees during the site visit, it was mentioned that they had just approved a new aviation program. Following institutional approval, proposals for new programs go to the Illinois Community College Board for review and approval. Evidence provided in the assurance argument includes meeting minutes from both division and college curriculum committees.

The process for reviewing and approving new programs includes a feasibility study, discussion of how to assure quality in the new program, cost-effectiveness of the program, financial analysis of both the revenue and expenditures, curriculum details, how student learning will be assessed, faculty qualifications, and academic control information. This information is based on the HLC substantive change forms and provides a consistent base of data on the new program for decision making from the department and program level, through the Board of Trustees, and on to the state and accrediting bodies.

COD Board Policy 6.02 was created to define how academic credit is assigned and awarded. The policy, contained in the assurance argument, details how the institution's practice in this area is consistent with commonly accepted credit hour practices in higher education, including the federal definition of the credit hour. The policy states, "The College will equate its learning experiences with semester credit hours." As evidence of this practice, all academic program lengths at the COD are

measured by credit hour and are consistent with the standards set by Illinois Community College Board. For example, the seven associate degrees conferred by COD require the student to earn a minimum of 64 credits.

COD maintains several active articulation agreements with four-year institutions that require its programs to be rigorous and relevant. These include Northern Illinois University, University of Illinois – Chicago, the University of Illinois – Champaign-Urbana, and DePaul University. During the site visit, the team heard discussions at both the administrative and faculty levels about working collaboratively with these partner four-year institutions to ensure ease of transfer for credit hours earned at COD to four-year universities.

Undergraduate credentials awarded by COD are the certificate and the associate's degree. Currently, the institution awards seven associate degrees. The distinction between a certificate credential and an associate's degree is characterized by the requirement of the completion of the core general education curriculum for associate's degree recipients. The general education curriculum is built around seven learning outcomes: critical thinking, information literacy, cultural and historical comprehension, expression and exchange of ideas, human behavior and societal knowledge, quantitative reasoning, and scientific reasoning. The maintenance of the general education curriculum is divided between the Student Learning and Assessment Committee (SLAC), which oversees critical thinking and information literacy, and individual academic departments that oversee the remaining areas of the core curriculum.

Each academic program of study at COD maintains its own unique outcomes and individual courses have customized student learning objectives. The outcomes are publicly communicated through the institution's website and the course learning outcomes are published in the syllabus and on the learning management system, BlackBoard. Students are made aware of the outcomes through these mechanisms. During the site visit, the team interacted with a broad array of faculty and administration who participate in the assessment process. Faculty expressed ownership of course and program assessment outcomes and processes, while the SLAC and related staff discussed numerous professional development opportunities in the area of assessment, including regular in-service days.

The COD delivers courses in five modalities: face-to-face, online synchronous, online asynchronous, hybrid, and dual credit. According to both the assurance argument and evidence collected during the site visit, regardless of the delivery method, all courses at the COD adhere to the master syllabus. A review of a sample of syllabi shows different sections of the same course have identical student learning outcomes. The team did feel that the COD could benefit from the purchase of a syllabi management software package. This would allow them to more closely track student learning outcomes across sections, courses, and programs and link them to broader institutional learning outcome goals.

The institution aids both faculty and students in support of different learning modalities. These include faculty professional development through in-service days, remote tutoring, testing, advising, and technology loans. However, the most notable form of assistance provided in support of student learning was the very robust program for supporting adjunct faculty. According to the assurance argument, 62% of all COD faculty are adjuncts. The institution has created an administrative office whose sole responsibility is to onboard new adjunct faculty and provide continuous support to these part-time faculty throughout their teaching relationship with the COD. For example, new adjunct faculty are observed at least once during their first year of teaching, often within the first semester. The information collected through this observation is used to improve instruction through a mentoring program between the department chair and adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty are also

included in the existing faculty evaluation process, which requires observation and information collected from student course evaluations.

As final evidence of the COD's commitment to quality teaching and learning, particularly among its adjunct population is the Adjunct Faculty Training Institute (AFTI). The work of this program begins even before an adjunct is hired with a review of candidate credentials and fit for the courses proposed to be taught. As ongoing training, the AFTI hosts sessions on student success; diversity, equity, and inclusion; assessment, college teaching, how to engage students in the classroom; and classroom management. These sessions are open to not only adjunct faculty but also full-time faculty at the COD. Overall, the site visit team felt the COD's adjunct faculty support program was one of the shining stars of the institution's services and worthy of replication by two- and four-year institutions of higher education across the country.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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The College of DuPage (COD) maintains a general education curriculum that requires at least 18 credits in courses in seven categories. This is an appropriate level of general education instruction given all associate degrees at the institution require a minimum of 64 credit hours, which includes the general education courses. The general education curriculum was developed to be consistent with the institution's mission, educational offerings, and that of an associate's degree-granting institution.

The faculty at the COD have created general education student learning outcomes to measure the efficacy of the general education curriculum and to facilitate ongoing improvements to the offerings over time. These general education learning outcomes and the related curriculum requirements are communicated to students through the institution's website, on posters throughout campus, through program requirement publications, and individual course syllabi. The site visit team encourages COD to more clearly and consistently link its general education student learning outcomes within its program and course requirements via the syllabi and assessment evidence, thereby showing alignment between the two aspects of assessment and curriculum management.

The purpose of the general education curriculum is to ensure graduates gain "a broad body of knowledge and skills common to all educated people, regardless of their profession." When asked during the site visit how this philosophy was developed, a faculty member relayed a story of broad collaboration amongst faculty and academic leadership. For example, there have been regular additions and deletions to the general education curriculum over the years. These changes have been facilitated by faculty input through both the Student Learning and Assessment Committee (SLAC)

and the general education committee.

Students interact with the general education curriculum by taking courses in seven broad categories: humanities and fine arts, communication, mathematics, physical and life sciences, social and behavioral sciences, critical thinking, and information literacy. The final two categories are integrated throughout the curriculum by the SLAC. During the site visit, the team inquired as to the true level of integration of these final two general education categories and heard examples from a broad array of academic departments, including speech communication, religion and philosophy, anatomy and physiology, and architecture and construction management. Each shared their department's efforts to include critical thinking and information literacy in their courses and programs.

In addition, representatives of the library staff shared their efforts to support the two broad general education categories, most notably information literacy. A library staff person shared during an open session how the library at the COD is organized around the liaison model of service. Each academic program area is assigned a specific library staff person who works directly with the faculty in that area not only on their academic resource needs but also in helping them design critical thinking and information literacy assignments and assessments for their courses.

COD has created equity value guides that state, "Everyone in our college community has an equal opportunity to pursue their academic, personal, and professional goals." This statement and the related plan were created following the addition of equity as a pillar in the institution's strategic plan. During the site visit, numerous examples arose from both faculty, staff, and administration regarding how this pillar has been implemented on campus. For example, there was a "21-Day Equity Challenge that promoted ideas for how to include equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of the institution's work. These ideas included: equity-minded syllabi, how to teach race; the "four connections" concept; supporting students of color; and inclusivity reading seminars. The result was a comprehensive approach to enhancing equity, diversity, and inclusion across campus for all levels of employees: faculty (both full-time and adjunct), staff, and administration.

During an on-campus discussion between the site visit team and faculty, the topic of the institution's strategic plan goal to "create an institutional culture of student access, equity, and inclusion" was discussed. When asked by the team how this goal has been achieved by the campus, a student in the audience raised his hand and shared his personal experience. The Office of Disability Support at COD, the student said, went far beyond the services required by law. He said the office sees its role as one of providing access to a diverse body of students inclusive of individuals like him who have autism. The student relayed how the staff and faculty had embraced his diversity in learning and helped him achieve a college degree. He also cited the Learning Commons staff and programs as being particularly helpful to him. A second student, who also had autism, then raised his hand and relayed how he had served as an orientation leader. This opportunity allowed him to feel included in the campus and demonstrated, in his words, how the COD "brings people with disabilities and those without together."

Individual students experience the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion through the general education requirement to complete at least one course in human relations and one in global/multicultural studies. This requirement was put in place by the faculty to ensure students have a broad awareness of human and cultural diversity. Coursework in these two areas aligns with the general education learning outcomes in human behavior, societal knowledge, and cultural and historical comprehension.

COD has a variety of outlets for both faculty and students to showcase their creative and academic work. These include university publications, art exhibitions, theater and musical productions, the Courier student newspaper, COD in Lingua (a foreign-language journal), ESSAI Anthology of Academic Writing Across the Curriculum, and The Prairie Light Review (a juried liberal arts publication). In addition, the institution hosts a student research symposium annually that highlights students' academic work such as papers, presentations, posters, artwork, and theatrical and musical performances. Evidence of these opportunities was included in the institution's assurance argument and verified through on-campus interviews with students and faculty.

Scholarship and ongoing professional learning are built into the faculty's workload. Achievements in academic research and publication can be used toward advancement in academic rank. Faculty can also apply for sabbatical leave to pursue academic interests. Faculty academic work is archived in the institution's library, which seeks to preserve and showcase scholarly, educational, and creative works created by the college community. One issue with opportunities such as these for adjunct faculty is that they do not receive additional compensation for participating in these "extra" opportunities. To incentivize the same level of engagement among part-time faculty as that of full-time, COD would be well served to identify a mechanism for compensating adjunct faculty for engaging in research and professional learning that honors their time commitment over and above teaching.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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At the College of DuPage (COD), all hiring managers and search committee participants are required to complete diversity training prior to service. This fact was verified during an open session on criterion three during the site visit. The content of this training includes: how to conduct interviews, legally appropriate questioning of candidates, and identifying personal biases. Several of the faculty and staff present during the open session commented that screening committee members are unable to gain access to candidate resumes until they have completed the required training, even if they have previously served on a search committee. The training is contained in a series of videos and is scenario-based, allowing committee members to see actual examples of how search committee members might demonstrate a bias against candidates of color. In addition to the training videos, the human resources office at COD puts out a regular newsletter on the topic for managers that provides ongoing information about diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Internal practice at COD requires that during at least two stages of the search process, at least 18% of full-time candidate pools identify as diverse. This metric provides human resources staff with a two-step "check-in" with search committees to ensure an appropriate level of candidates of color are progressing through the search process. Search processes that do not meet that threshold are evaluated for candidates who are not progressing and discussions with the hiring manager about the



process used to arrive at a pool of finalists that is insufficient in candidates of color. While changes may or not be made to the process for such challenged searches, it is a consistent analysis by human resources into the hiring and search practices of the institution.

In fall 2021, COD had 264 full-time faculty and 957 adjunct faculty. Full-time faculty teach approximately 38% of all courses with adjunct faculty teaching the remaining 62%. The institution acknowledges this high level of adjunct faculty staffing and strives to fully integrate part-time teachers into its community of scholars. This is achieved by onboarding and training adjunct faculty through programs and services described in evidentiary statements contained in 3B.

Faculty, both full-time and adjunct, have contracts that specify course assignments, workload, evaluation, and additional duties such as oversight of the curriculum, expectations of student performance, required academic credentials, assessment activities, and committee work. During the site visit, the team discussed these contracts and the related expectations extensively with the faculty. The faculty shared that the degree to which an individual faculty member is evaluated in one or all of these five areas is highly customized through conversations between the faculty member and their program director or dean. Year one in this three-year cycle of faculty evaluation is dedicated to consultation between the faculty member and dean where an agreement on what will be evaluated is discussed and codified. While there is sometimes respectful disagreement, generally the faculty said the administration seeks to support faculty expertise as it relates to their teaching, advising, curricular, and service job components.

Those faculty designated as discipline or program chairs have additional responsibilities that include: leading the curriculum process, developing class schedules and teaching assignments, developing assessment plans, and other administrative duties. These extra duties are integrated into their evaluations by the academic deans. While the department chairs with whom the site visit team interacted shared evaluative stories similar to those of faculty, they were quick to point out the duties that distinguished them from teaching faculty and were part of their performance review.

COD maintains policies that clearly define the academic qualifications of faculty. These policies include guidelines for high school instructors leading dual credit courses. The policies are in alignment with the Higher Learning Commission's faculty qualification policy. During the site visit, a review of 17 randomly selected faculty personnel files showed no deviation from either COD or HLC's faculty qualification policy. Of the 17 faculty members randomly selected, six (35%) were full-time faculty representing disciplines ranging from accounting and horticulture to automotive technology and nursing. The remaining eleven (65%) were part-time adjunct faculty from disciplines such as business, computer science, welding, dental hygiene, early childhood, mathematics, and religious studies. Six of the eleven adjunct faculty were members of the COD Adjunct Association and five were not.

The Office of Human Resources maintains a master list of qualifications needed to teach each course at the institution. This list is used during the hiring process to ensure compliance with both the institution and HLC's academic qualification policies. A review of that master list by the site visit team evidenced a comprehensive document that would be useful to both human resources professionals and faculty hiring managers alike. In addition, all faculty job descriptions set forth the minimum academic and/or work experience qualifications needed for the intended teaching assignments. A review of job descriptions contained in the randomly-pulled faculty personnel files showed the presence of the minimum qualifications for a majority of the individuals polled.

COD maintains policies that establish a regular timeline for faculty evaluations, both full-time and

adjunct employees. For example, the policy states, “Faculty working toward tenure may be expected to complete a full evaluation cycle at least once a year during their probationary period.” Tenured faculty are formally evaluated every three years. The process for evaluating faculty includes both the faculty member being evaluated and the evaluator, typically the program director. In year one of the three-year cycle, both the faculty member and their evaluator create a plan of evaluation. In the second year, the formal evaluation is completed, which is then updated in the third year. Faculty are evaluated in five different categories: teaching, advising, curriculum development, institutional committee work, and other relevant activities as stated in their contract. Faculty are given the opportunity to provide written evidence of their activities in these five areas and their goals for the coming evaluation cycle. The evaluator, typically the program director, is actively engaged in the evaluation process. For example, one element of evaluating teaching is done through classroom observation. This is true regardless of the modality (face-to-face, hybrid, online, etc.). Student input is considered in the evaluation process through annual student course evaluations. The site visit team encourages COD to create a regular process for collecting student input for all course sections that are useful to the institution beyond faculty evaluations. The opportunity to learn from students from each course section about their experience in the course can prove invaluable to both faculty leaders and the institution itself without negatively impacting its current purpose of contributing to the faculty evaluation process.

COD schedules six days in the academic calendar known as “In-Service Days” devoted solely to professional development. During In-Service Days, faculty attend programs specifically designed to enhance their teaching roles. While some of these programs are offered by current college faculty, many are presented by external experts. Recent In-Service Day themes include: creating a culture of caring, recovering our bandwidth, and critical thinking assessment and improvements. Both full-time and adjunct faculty are encouraged to attend In-Service Days. During a focused session on assessment, the idea of dedicating a portion of the next in-service day to cocurricular assessment was brought up by faculty participating in that session. The site visit team believes such an institution-wide commitment to cocurricular assessment demonstrated by the use of an in-service day will set the tone for a more widespread assessment of cocurricular activities in the future.

The institution maintains several organizational mechanisms for ensuring ongoing faculty professional development. These include a Faculty Professional Development Committee, an Office of Adjunct Faculty Support, and the Office of Learning Technologies. In addition, the college has invested in the “Cornerstone” system, which allows faculty and staff to search for and engage in on-demand training opportunities throughout the year. The Cornerstone system maintains a “transcript” of employee courses attempted and completed. Courses contained on Cornerstone include teaching and learning practices; equity, access, and inclusivity; and assessment practices.

Finally, each full-time faculty member receives up to \$1,850 annually for professional development activities. Full-time faculty are also required to complete six clock hours of professional development each year, in addition to the opportunity to apply for a one-year or one-semester sabbatical to pursue professional development. This very generous allocation of institutional funds facilitates the consistent, high-quality, ongoing professional development of faculty both to enhance their teaching efficacy, but also discipline-specific learning and to enhance skills in critical areas such as student success and assessment.

Faculty members at COD must maintain at least ten (10) office hours per week per their faculty contract. During COVID-19, an MOU modified in-person office hours to ensure students had access to faculty in a manner appropriate to the modality of their coursework. Contact information and

office hours are required to be included in each course's syllabus. The institution's website also notes faculty office hours, phone number, and email. Faculty office hours are reviewed by the program director. Each full-time faculty member is provided with a private office for student consultation, while adjunct faculty have a dedicated shared space in which to meet students.

A wide variety of student support services are provided at COD, including academic tutoring, mental health counseling, career counseling, financial aid, and cocurricular activities. Staff engaged in these activities are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development. Every staff member can access up to \$1,850 in professional development funds. During the site visit, the team reviewed staff credential files for individuals employed in these areas. The Office of Human Resources provided team members with files containing application materials, professional development activities, and other materials. There appeared to be a clear connection between the assigned job and the staff person's credentials and professional development activities. In addition, the institution maintains an online database containing information on position requirements. In anticipation of HLC's decennial visit in six years, the institution should ensure it has clearly defined job descriptions, clearly defined expectations for those jobs, and a clear connection that the individual filling the position is meeting those expectations. Should the institution choose to hire someone who does not meet those job expectations, the college should have a specific plan of professional development to close that gap.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

### 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

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

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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Incoming new students to the College of DuPage (COD) participate in an orientation session that introduces the services available to them and encourages them to become actively involved with those opportunities. The curriculum of this program is designed to ensure first-time students receive information about navigating campus; interacting with faculty; accessing services such as financial aid, tutoring, course registration, and academic advising; using Blackboard and the online student portal; and study skills.

The Student Services Center and “Campus Central” serve as the front door of the institution and provide a one-stop-shop for information about key services such as applying for admission, registering for classes, accessing financial aid, navigating both the online portal and learning management system, testing, payment information, student records, and graduation. Assistance for non-English speakers and online support is also provided at “Campus Central.”

The institution provides the expected range of support services, including counseling; advising; testing; financial assistance; a Center for Student Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; campus activities; and student life. Services provided by these offices include financial literacy counseling from financial aid, embedded tutoring in gateway courses, study skills assessment, writing assistance, and a career strength finder. Staff from these offices interviewed during the site visit characterized their approach to these services as “wrap around” and repeatedly commented on how they facilitate a hand-off to other services, not merely a referral. This means they follow up with the office to which they send a student in need and/or the office receiving the student proactively reaches out to the student inviting them to obtain assistance.

The institution maintains a “Learning Commons” where students can receive specialized academic support services in areas such as mathematics, reading, writing, speech, and other disciplines. The services in the commons are offered free of charge and provided in group or individual formats. The

facility contains private study rooms, cubicles, and open tables for tutoring, along with computers for testing and writing. Learning Commons staff regularly provide workshops on specific topics of interest to students needing academic support. Students also receive testing services to assist with their proper placement in math and English courses, in keeping with institutional and State of Illinois guidelines.

As was described earlier, COD maintains a robust and well-stocked library to ensure student access to information resources, research assistance, study space, and technology needed to be academically successful. A visit to the library by a member of the site visit team revealed a modern facility that offers support and enhanced services such as podcast recording studios, video recording studios, and the ability to check out instructional materials that are identical to those found in classrooms and laboratories, particularly in the sciences. The COD library is open 80 hours per week for access by students who have non-traditional study schedules.

The institution has established four regional centers to better serve students who cannot travel to the main campus. These centers are located in Addison, Carol Stream, Naperville, and Westmont. During a discussion of criterion three, a director of one of the regional centers spoke up to share with the team the extensive level to which the college goes to ensure students studying at the regional centers have access to the same high-quality instruction and education and support resources as students on the main Glen Ellyn campus. The director specifically cited training for staff, marketing of educational offerings, student life activities, welcome week activities, and wrap-around support services such as counseling, tutoring, advising, registration, and financial aid. The team was left with the very clear impression that COD is committed to ensuring alignment between instruction and support at the regional centers with that found on the main campus.

COD also offers extensive online course offerings, particularly since the COVID-19 outbreak. Numerous examples were provided of how the institution ensures that online students receive the same quality of instruction and access to support services as face-to-face students. For example, fully-remote proctoring services are available to online students taking tests in replication of the services offered by the main campus testing center. Mental health counseling is available online for digital students wishing to discuss their mental health with a counselor. Finally, the library uses a chat application to engage students online and to identify the resources they need for their classes. All of these digital services are designed to provide robust access to support for online students.

COD maintains a cohort of 30 counselors in the Department of Counseling, Advising, and Transfer. Of the 30 counselors, one is designated specifically for students with disabilities and another solely for mental health. These individuals serve four roles in interacting with students: academic advising, mental health counseling, educational planning, and career counseling. These staff members carry the licensed professional counselor (LPC) certification and are classified as faculty, though they do not generally teach credit-bearing courses. As it relates to academic advising, when a student identifies an academic path, they are handed off to a member of the faculty in the appropriate academic discipline. After this hand-off, counselors continue to provide services in the areas of mental health counseling, educational planning, and career counseling.

In addition to counselors, the college recently hired thirteen "navigators" who provide concierge services to at-risk students and therefore increase their likelihood of success. Navigators work with students on issues such as organization skills, study skills, and time management. In order to qualify for assistance by navigators, students must meet one of the following criteria: high school grade point average <3.0; <18 on the ACT or <950 on the SAT; reading placement score of a 2, 3, 4, or 5; a GPA of 2.0-2.5 with <23 of COD credit hours; being placed on academic warning. Navigators stay

with their assigned students longitudinally throughout their time at COD. The navigator office is open until 6:00 p.m. each evening for ease of access by participating students. Currently, each navigator has an assigned portfolio of 165 students (approximately 2,000 students total in the program). The institution expressed a desire to add an additional 30-35 navigators to serve the entire degree-seeking student population of 20,000+ students.

Through the High Learning Commission's survey of current COD students and from evidence collected during the site visit, it became apparent there is confusion as to the role of navigator versus the role of counselor. The distinction was described to the team during the site visit as, "Navigators focus on the skills of living while counselors focus on the analytical side of counseling." Even with this on-site clarification, confusion remains. Students who completed the HLC survey indicated they were unsure who to go to for academic advising: navigators, counselors, or faculty. When the site team reviewed the website for information on student success, the terms "navigator," "counselor," and "student success coach" appeared to be used interchangeably. Because counselors are classified as faculty, though they do not regularly teach classes, the faculty association has become involved in the issue. The site visit team strongly encourages the institution to clarify these roles. For example, the college may wish to consider designating "counselors" as those trained in delivering mental health counseling. Subsequently, individuals designated as "academic advisors" could focus on career and academic planning. Finally, "navigators" could focus on early alert intervention, skill development, and connection to wrap-around services. While each of these three areas is critical to student success, a lack of clarity among students, faculty, and staff is not advancing the institution's goal of improving student success. Ensuring clarity through its inward communication and outward-facing materials will assist in this effort.

During the site visit, the team split up into three groups and inspected as many facilities as possible on this very large campus. Buildings and resources visited included: the automotive repair lab, the culinary and hospitality labs, performing arts spaces, general classrooms, the library, science labs, faculty offices, the "navigator" office, and the technology center. The site visit team observed infrastructure and resources required to more than adequately serve the teaching and learning needs of faculty and students. The facilities and educational resources are well maintained, which is a testament to the physical plant staff given COD has over two million square feet of space under roof.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

### Rationale

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The College of DuPage (COD) offers academic programs and services that are appropriate to an institution of higher education offering associate degrees and certificates. Through the assurance argument and during the site visit, the team obtained numerous examples of how the institution develops, tracks, and utilizes student learning outcomes at both the course, program, and institution level to enhance the quality of the education offered to COD students. These learning outcomes are consistent across all modes of delivery at COD: face-to-face, online asynchronous, online synchronous, hybrid, and dual credit.

The college has developed a general education curriculum organized around seven themes and designed to provide all students with a base of knowledge required to be successful in today's career environment. The general education or "core" curriculum is grounded in the institution's mission and clearly supports its associate degree educational offerings. The maintenance of the general education curriculum is divided between the Student Learning and Assessment Committee and appropriate academic programs and faculty.

Included in the general education curriculum and embedded throughout the institution's programs and services is a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This commitment included two courses that all students must take before being awarded an associate's degree.

While COD has a contingent of full-time faculty in most program areas, the institution relies heavily on adjunct faculty. A review of faculty files during the site visit reveals that faculty are appropriately qualified and credentialed for their teaching assignments. This appears to be true for full-time, adjunct, online, and dual credit faculty. Because over sixty percent of faculty are adjuncts, the institution has invested an enormous amount of time and resources into ensuring the quality of adjunct instruction and the integration of adjunct faculty into the life of the college. All faculty, full-time and adjunct, are evaluated on a regular schedule in a manner that honors both the role of faculty (teaching, advising, curriculum development, and committee work) as well as individualized initiatives based on each faculty member's interests and assignments. Faculty are provided with generous financial and time benefits to pursue professional development both in their discipline and in areas of interest such as advising, teaching, and assessment. College of DuPage faculty have regular office hours that facilitate access by students regardless of the mode of instruction. The qualifications and support for professional development among staff mirrors that of faculty.

Repeatedly, the site visit team heard faculty, staff, and administrators speak of the intense focus the institution has on student success. COD has invested an enormous amount of resources into this effort and has created a "wrap-around" cohort of support programs that have positively impacted retention and completion. These include academic advising, concierge navigation services, financial aid, mental health counseling, career counseling, remedial math and English assistance, embedded and on-demand tutoring, and many others. These services are offered in modern, well-maintained facilities containing an abundance of educational resources more than appropriate to facilitate high-quality teaching and learning at an associate's degree-granting college.

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

### 4.A - Core Component 4.A

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The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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As detailed in the Assurance Argument and affirmed during the site visit in open forums on criterion 3 and criterion 4, the College of DuPage (COD) utilizes a rigorous, systematic program review process for all of its academic programs. Expanding on the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) requirements, the process includes a needs analysis as well as a review of the cost-effectiveness, quality, action planning, and a look at annual updates made throughout the five-year cycle. The program review process is supported by COD-led workshops to assist in data analysis as well as understanding the process itself. The program review process is also periodically reviewed to inform the college's continuous improvement efforts and to incorporate stakeholder feedback. Efforts are being made to streamline the process by providing an online system to collect and house the data and artifacts applicable to the program review process.



COD has established procedures, policies, and personnel designated to evaluate all transcribed credit including credit awarded for military service, experiential learning, prior learning, Advanced Placement, and College Level Examination Program subject examinations. In addition, students may demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language by earning the Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy or Biliteracy Commendation through their high school.

COD assures the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer through the Office of Student Records, which evaluates official transcripts following the college's Transfer Evaluation Policy. Additionally, COD offers 3+1 and 2+2 transfer pathway programs as well as reverse transfer agreements with several four-year institutions allowing students who transfer to a four-year institution before earning their associate's degree to earn their associate's while attending their selected four-year institution.

Full authority over course prerequisites, the quality and rigor of courses, programs, and expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications are maintained by COD. This includes all dual credit course offerings and instructors. COD adheres to ICCB Administrative Rule Section 1501.507(b)11 and the Dual Credit Quality Act to ensure parity between its dual credit courses/faculty and its traditional college offerings. Curricular decisions including the development of new programs are made through a shared governance process.

College of DuPage maintains specialized accreditation from discipline-specific credentialing organizations where appropriate. Twenty programs hold external programmatic accreditation and these are published in the college's catalog as well as on the college's website. The anesthesia technology program was placed on probation in 2021 and, in response, will be discontinued as of August 2022.

As a community partner, COD values its commitment to the success of its graduates. Using graduate surveys and employer surveys, COD provides student exit data utilized in the program review process as well as its data dashboards to ensure program relevancy and outcome alignment. The most recent survey results from FY 2019-20 indicate that 80% of respondents felt COD prepared them for their continued education and 76% were very satisfied with their experience at COD.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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College of DuPage (COD) demonstrated well-defined processes for assessing programmatic student learning for general education, technical disciplines, and cocurricular activities in its assurance argument that were confirmed through various open forums and focus area sessions during the site visit. In 2019, COD created an Assessment Office and hired an Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes Director. Assessment Office personnel assist in managing the communication, processes, and training related to general education, technical discipline, and cocurricular assessment. The Student Learning and Assessment Committee (SLAC)—comprised of a broad spectrum of faculty across divisions, adjunct faculty, and representatives from the Assessment/Student Success and Program Review offices—leads the general education assessment process. Additional stakeholders are included in SLAC's subcommittees, which broadens the oversight of and participation in assessment-specific activities.

In response to HLC's recommendation to COD to increase its focus on general education assessment, the college refined its approach to focus on seven student learning outcomes: critical thinking, information literacy, cultural and historical comprehension (humanities and fine arts), expression and exchange of ideas (communication), human behavior and societal knowledge (social and behavioral sciences), quantitative reasoning (mathematics), and scientific reasoning (physical and life sciences). While critical thinking and information literacy span the spectrum of all general education courses, the remaining five areas are aligned with discipline-specific coursework. COD's General Education Assessment Plan functions in three phases: collect, assess and plan improvements, and improve. The SLAC members lead the critical thinking and information literacy assessments while subcommittees lead the five discipline-specific assessment efforts. The college has assessed nearly 4000 student artifacts through its process since its inception in 2019. While the calibration and review of such a large number of artifacts may appear cumbersome, the process was identified by attendees of several open forums and focus area participants as being the most rewarding and impactful aspect of the assessment plan.

In response to HLC's recommendation to COD to provide evidence of ongoing improvements of

cocurricular assessment efforts, SLAC formed a Cocurricular Assessment Committee in 2020. The Cocurricular Assessment Committee in conjunction with SLAC and Student Affairs leadership developed a definition of cocurricular programming and activities at the college: “Learning activities, programs, and experiences that align with and reinforce the formal curriculum.” The Cocurricular Assessment Committee supported by the Assessment Office developed targeted professional development opportunities to assist in differentiating between learning and support outcomes. In addition, cocurricular-specific data was incorporated into the program review process where appropriate. COD’s cocurricular assessment aligns with its seven general education assessment outcomes. During the site visit’s focus area meeting, several salient examples were provided demonstrating the use of cocurricular assessment data to refine cocurricular programming and activities specifically as they related to shifting from face-to-face to virtual interactions during the pandemic. COD plans to expand its cocurricular assessment efforts as the college regains its momentum post-pandemic including a Cocurricular Assessment Poster Session.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

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

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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According to its assurance argument, the College of DuPage (COD) defines its goals for student retention, persistence, and completion broadly through its Strategic Long-Range Plan (SLRP) and more specifically through its Annual Plan with the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) of demonstrating an “increase of 1% for 3-year completion rates for full and part-time students” annually. The college also set goals (increase by 4%) for improving completion rates for Black, Latinx, and under-resourced (Pell-eligible) students in order to address the equity gap. To support these efforts, COD has a broad array of student support services designed to assist in increasing student success. During the site visit, criterion 4 forum participants shared examples of such support including a contingent of Navigators whose job it is to coach students in college success skills as well as connect students to resources, such as a Center for Student Success.

COD's institutional priority of Student Success is demonstrated through its SLRP, which aligns with its Illinois Equity in Attainment Initiative Equity Plan. COD utilizes the data it collects on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to identify opportunities of strategies aimed at improving student success. One example is the implementation of the Guided Pathways model, which led to the development and posting of program completion maps as well as program transfer maps. COD uses student success metrics dashboards including AACC Pathways metrics (early momentum, persistence, and completion), which disaggregate data in relation to race/ethnicity, gender, age, full or part-time status, developmental status, and program. Initiatives such as the English Accelerated Learning Program and Transitions Math are examples of data-driven improvements aimed at positively impacting student success through targeted retention, persistence,

and completion efforts.

COD has developed a framework of processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing data on student retention, persistence, and completion that reflects good practice. Internal transparency of these data within appropriate boundaries of integrity and confidentiality have been well-documented and were confirmed by both the SLAC and Student Services personnel during the site visit.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## **4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary**

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

### **Rationale**

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The assurance argument, supported by the site visit, presented clear evidence that the College of DuPage maintains accountability for the quality of its educational programs and demonstrates dedication to the process of continuous improvement through the documented evaluation of student learning – both curricular and cocurricular. The college is encouraged to document the implementation of assessment data collection and analysis processes and procedures it has recently developed as they are implemented and to periodically evaluate those processes to ensure validity and reliability.

## 5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

### 5.A - Core Component 5.A

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Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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The College of DuPage (COD) demonstrates a significant level of shared governance as demonstrated to the review team during the visit. The Board of Trustees discussed the different ways they are engaged with the shared governance elements of the campus; for instance, the development of the strategic plan, the presidential search, oversight of the administration, and Board members serving as liaisons on specific committees at the college.

Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved with shared governance through their active participation on committees throughout the college. The Shared Governance Council is central to this participation. All board policies and administrative procedures go through the Shared Governance Council, which includes members from students, faculty, and staff governing committees. Shared Governance Council members report back to the broader meetings of their governance groups. These focused governing bodies are responsible for disseminating information occurring at the institutional level to front-line employees and students.

Another example of shared governance at COD was through the process of writing the strategic plan. The Strategic Planning Committee brought input from the college constituencies and from outside the campus to address both the mission, vision, and guiding strategic initiatives of the college. The Strategic Planning Committee started with a group of 25-30 people having discussions about what initiatives needed to be included in the plan. External groups also participated through a SWOT

analysis that informed the plan. The Board of Trustees added an emphasis on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to the plan. The strategic planning committee communicated with the college campus through the website, publications, and an internal intranet system.

COD gave evidence that the college uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents. The college maintains a research and planning portal where all official research is posted for access by faculty and staff. All institution-wide statistics are housed there along with dashboards that are based on standard reports. The site team heard praise from the departments on how helpful these data are for the review of programs, developing specialized accreditation arguments, and generally making decisions for the college. Some examples of these decisions using data include:

- COD created the “attrition funnel” to better understand data on students who do not persist.
- Any request for operational funds or an additional position must include supporting data to justify the request.
- Reviewing students who at some point had performance-related flags and comparing them to the general population as a way of developing programs to assist students.
- SOAP data allowed the college to request technology for the classroom that has positively impacted student success.
- Phi Theta Kappa conducted a survey of students related to food insecurity. Using the data collected, they developed a food pantry that addresses food insecurity and equity issues.

It is clear from the assurance argument and reinforced by the site visit that the college’s administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policies, and processes. The faculty are responsible for developing, evaluating, and updating all of the institution’s educational programs. They work with the administration to update the curriculum and oversee changes and development in the courses and programs.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*



## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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COD has qualified and trained staff, and it demonstrates an extraordinary commitment to preparedness by allotting \$1850 per employee per year for professional development. This funding helps ensure that employees stay qualified in their areas. The site team heard examples of different ways employees use their professional development funds from new certifications to pursuing a master's degree. The use of professional development funds must be approved by a supervisor and an administrator.

Other avenues for professional development exist throughout the college. The Employee Development Center provides workshops and playlists for various training on campus. Departments can also add line items in their budget for professional development needs if the individual employee funds are already allocated or if there is a need for department-level training. This can cover travel or bringing in a consultant/speaker. Employees can upload professional development achievements and certifications into the learning management system to create an informal transcript of training received. This action provides evidence of ongoing professional development and qualifications.

Physical tours of the COD campus confirmed the infrastructure is sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered. Laboratories for hands-on class activities were available in many departments, including health care, welding, culinary, and much more. The classrooms were in good condition creating a comfortable environment. Students had access to several computer labs in each building. The library and learning commons provide students with access to not only books, but rooms to work on podcasts, record videos, and check out models for anatomy class. There are also several study rooms that can be checked out by individuals or groups to promote a good study environment. These study rooms are equipped with technology, whiteboards, and other tools to assist students.

Evidence that the college's goals are incorporated into the mission was apparent in the discussion of the strategic planning process. Presentations, discussions, and debates on what should be included in

the college's plan happened throughout the process. Data used to support ideas and the needs of COD led to active discussions. Committee members were responsible to report back to their constituency groups. Presentations were made at the Board of Trustees, administrator-level, and manager-level meetings. Communication went back and forth at given points in the development process. By the end of the process, everyone came together to agree on four fundamental ideas, referred to as the pillars. It is clear from conversations during open forums that college constituents felt heard and are proud of COD's strategic pillars.

The annual evaluation process includes the college's goals. During this annual process, every employee sets their individual goals to align with the strategic plan. All of these goals are developed with their supervisors and are realistic for their area on campus.

COD's annual budget process begins with a baseline budget that is determined using key assumptions to anticipate revenues and expenditures. If a budgetary gap exists, they try to close that gap by reviewing the college's priorities according to the strategic plan. Assumptions are shared with budget officers who work with cabinet members to develop their budgets based on action plans for each of their departments. Budget officers help the departments meet their goals. Budget officers and budget committee members meet throughout the year to review the budget as the year progresses.

COD uses Ellucian Colleague for managing the budget and the reporting. All authorized budget users can log into the portal to see the budgets for the departments they manage. Evidence that the budgets are monitored using several checks and balances exists throughout the college's processes. The budget officers have access to the budgets and can see any actual expenses, encumbrances, and remaining balance. This allows them to determine if the budget is on track or not. The software allows officers to make notes. The college also prepares a monthly budget report for the Board of Trustees with year-to-date expenses versus projections, as well as comparisons to the previous year. The budget office reports forecasted data and actuals to the college president.

If a budget manager overspends, a "funds availability check" will prevent purchase orders from that specific fund. In this situation, the budget manager can request a budget transfer. A budget transfer requires authorization to move funds. Budget transfers have to be approved by each supervisor up to the cabinet level. The budget office reviews the transfer, and the controller and the president must approve it before funds are transferred. All budget transfers are made available in the budget report to the Board of Trustees.

## **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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The College of DuPage (COD) provided evidence during the site visit of several ways that the college allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities. This was specifically evident in the process that the college uses to tie their Strategic Long-Range Plan (SLRP) to their budgeting process. All budget requests must describe how resources will be used and must be specifically tied to one of the four pillars of the strategic plan. Budget officers work with the cabinet members to develop a plan based on the SLRP to meet the action goals of the college.

For example, the funding of more “Navigators” to assist students with non-academic matters is one area that has been identified as a college priority. To meet the student body's needs, COD is working to increase the number of navigator positions from 14 to 45. This plan is clearly tied to the Student Success pillar of the SLRP.

The COD Budget Office begins the annual budget process with a baseline budget that is determined using key assumptions to anticipate our revenues and expenditures. They also use a five-year forecasting process to identify future needs. The campus budget committee is provided with information on enrollment trends along with the five-year plan to determine the amount of tuition revenue the college can expect for the upcoming fiscal years. When a gap in the budget is projected, the budget office and budget committee work to close the gap by reviewing and prioritizing the college goals. The Board of Trustees has final budget approval.

The planning process for the strategic plan and the annual budget is made up of internal and external constituent groups. This involves representatives from the faculty and staff committees on campus, administration, and the Board of Trustees. COD uses the SLRP to guide the college in operating

decisions. The SLRP and the budget are reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Cabinet to keep COD on track for achieving each strategy.

COD also uses an environmental scan for budgeting and planning purposes. This scan looks at the probability of change for the next 3-5 years to help COD plan for the future. The environmental scan is used in collaboration with the five-year Facility Master Plan to outline capital needs on the COD campus.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

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

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

### **Rationale**

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The College of DuPage demonstrated in their assurance argument and during the site visit that they have the resources, structure, and employees to fulfill their mission. The college's budgeting and planning processes include employees throughout the institution, administration, and Board of Trustees. Each level of campus constituents expressed an understanding of the planning and budgeting processes, especially how these processes are linked to the four pillars of the Strategic Long-Range Plan. The process to support long-term planning with data tracking was also evident throughout the visit.

## FC - Federal Compliance

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### Rating

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Does not require monitoring

### Federal Compliance Filing Form

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- FedCompFiling\_2020\_FRM\_(2).from\_SAdocx

### Rationale

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Federal Compliance Rationale Template

**Instructions:** When an evaluation that includes a Federal Compliance Review is released to the peer review team in the Assurance System, copy and paste the text below into the Rationale section of the Federal Compliance tab.

#### 1. ASSIGNMENT OF CREDITS, PROGRAM LENGTH AND TUITION

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

#### **Rationale:**

The College of DuPage, in its Policy Manual (Academic Affairs Policy No. 6.02), outlines the general expectations for compliance with definitions for credit hours assigned to coursework, specifically stating that the "...College will equate its learning experiences with semester credit hours commensurate with common practices in higher education for similar programs and consistent with the definition of "Credit Hour" under the relevant federal regulations. The College will establish and maintain articulated program lengths for each program it offers as measured by Credit Hour. In no event will the College set requirements inconsistent with the definitions of "Associate Degree" and "Certificate" set by the ICCB." [ICCB=Illinois Community College Board]. The same policy document notes that "The College's program costs, including tuition and fees, length and objectives will be commensurate with common practices in higher education unless otherwise justified. It is the College's policy to reasonably assure that information regarding its program costs, length, and objectives are fair, accurate, complete, and readily available to students and consumers." The College cites the ICCB as providing primary guidance on credit hours assigned based on class days. After reviewing the ICCB's "Program Approval Manual" and the "System Rules Manual" it was confirmed that the baseline credit hour for the College of DuPage is 750 minutes of class time per credit hour. The College outlined that the appropriate contact time is confirmed for coursework three times by the scheduling staff (6 months prior to term start, 3-4 months prior to term start, and two

weeks prior to the start of a term); the college has procedures for ensuring appropriate contact hours due to normal year-to-year calendar fluctuations in semester length.

Syllabi from past semesters were reviewed across a range of disciplines (Accounting, Anatomy, Health Sciences, and Microbiology) instructors, semester lengths, and instructional modalities. All seemed to conform to the standards of credit hour assignment.

## 2. INSTITUTIONAL RECORDS OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

### **Rationale:**

The policy manual for the College of DuPage (Section 5: Student Affairs) was reviewed. Section 5.19 outlines that the Assistant Provost of Student Affairs (and other officers) are to prescribe and implement Academic Grievance Processes. The Code of Academic Conduct (labeled Procedure No. 20-41) also outlines appeal processes and other avenues for students to address academic complaints. Online resources were also reviewed. College of DuPage has an online Student Complaint Process ([https://cod.edu/student\\_life/dean-of-students/student-complaint-process.aspx](https://cod.edu/student_life/dean-of-students/student-complaint-process.aspx)) and from that page, students can also find relevant links to the State of Illinois and HLC sites. That page also has links to information relevant to the Student Code of Conduct and other resources. The online complaint process outlines a procedure in which the Dean of Student Affairs will reply to the complaint within five days.

## 3. PUBLICATION OF TRANSFER POLICIES

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

### **Rationale:**

The College of DuPage's transfer policies were reviewed by surveying the publicly available web pages provided on the Federal Compliance Form. Typical guidance is provided to students (submit a transcript, meet with advisor); there appears to be a more flexible process for summer-only students taking a class or two to transfer back to their home institution. The College of DuPage outlines the process for Transcript Evaluation ([https://cod.edu/registration/records/trans\\_eval.aspx](https://cod.edu/registration/records/trans_eval.aspx)), including what grades are accepted for transfer and graduation requirements (GPA and Credit Hours). Additional details are provided in a PDF linked to that page. College of DuPage also provides a transfer-destination web page that provides students with links and information to "popular transfer destinations," both in-state and out-of-state. Under the various college links on that page 2+2/3+1 programs that the transfer-destination institutions offer with the College of DuPage. A link from that page also takes students to further resources, including Transferology.

## 4. PRACTICES FOR VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

**Rationale:**

The College of DuPage uses a typical approach to verifying student identity: a student ID number/password linked to a verified email account. A technology fee had historically been used to cover costs associated with distance learning (and communicated via <https://www.cod.edu/costs/tuition/>); the fee has been waived because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**5. PUBLICATION OF STUDENT OUTCOME DATA**

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

**Rationale:**

The College of DuPage publishes a PDF of Student Outcome Data ([https://www.cod.edu/about/administration/consumer\\_legal\\_information/pdf/completion-retention.pdf](https://www.cod.edu/about/administration/consumer_legal_information/pdf/completion-retention.pdf)) via its Student Right-To-Know webpage ([https://www.cod.edu/about/administration/consumer\\_legal\\_information/know.aspx](https://www.cod.edu/about/administration/consumer_legal_information/know.aspx)).

**6. STANDING WITH STATE AND OTHER ACCREDITING AGENCIES**

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements

**Rationale:**

The College of DuPage lists Programmatic Accreditation on its website ([https://www.cod.edu/about/accreditation/programmatic\\_accreditation.aspx](https://www.cod.edu/about/accreditation/programmatic_accreditation.aspx)), including HLC Accreditation. The College of DuPage indicates, via its website, the probationary status of its Anesthesia Technology program via the accreditation page and on its Anesthesia Technology page ([https://www.cod.edu/academics/programs/anesthesia\\_technology/](https://www.cod.edu/academics/programs/anesthesia_technology/)); COD has decided to close this program and is in the process of teach-out of the remaining students.

**APPENDIX A: TITLE IV PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

Complete this section only if the institution has submitted an Appendix A. Review any negative actions taken against the institution and identify any implications for the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or other HLC requirements. Provide a detailed rationale for any Core Components identified as Met with Concerns or Not Met.

**Rationale: Appendix A was in the materials submitted.**



**Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	
5	Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	
FC	Federal Compliance	Does not require monitoring

# Review Summary

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## Conclusion

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Based on clear and comprehensive evidence provided through the Assurance Argument and during the visit, the peer review team wholeheartedly recommends Reaffirmation.

College of DuPage (COD) clearly strives to embody its stated mission. The college values have been updated to include Integrity, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, and Equity. College leadership has made great strides in ensuring its practices reflect these values across its operations. Included in the general education curriculum and embedded throughout the institution's programs and services is a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

COD operates in accordance with Illinois state law. Evidence indicates that the Board of Trustees is responsible for considering and adopting the mission, vision, and philosophy of the college. The Board engages the community and campus constituencies as it reexamines the college's position through the development of the Strategic Long-Range Plan (SLRP).

Evidence from the visit demonstrates that COD supports the claims it makes about the educational experience students will receive. COD presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public through a robust website, in publications, and in the data it shares with various constituencies of the campus. In addition, evidence found in college policy and affirmed in a visit with the Board of Trustees shows a clear commitment to understanding the Board's responsibilities to the college and to the campus.

While the current Board may be cautious in its approach to enduring ethical conduct, the future composition of the board is unknown. Thus, the college may consider more clearly institutionalizing means to ensure the continued oversight of the board in a way to prevent any conflicts of interest. This may include not just recusal from a vote but also recusal from any discussion when a conflict arises. In addition, it is apparent that the workload commitment of the Board of Trustees is extremely high, which may result in a loss of interest in service to COD in the future. The college leadership and Board members should be mindful of this strain and consider what truly needs Board approval or attention and what does not.

The college promotes its effort to institute the Guided Pathways initiative as a means of ensuring that students are transferring to four-year institutions without unnecessary credit, but the large number and variety of course offerings would appear to run contrary to that effort. While it is commendable that the faculty are making efforts to provide diverse offerings to students, it may be in the faculty's best interest to research the transferability of these types of courses and to ensure that students are being appropriately served. It may be appropriate to decrease the number of courses offered and to dedicate the focus on a core of transferable courses.

Through the Assurance Argument and during the site visit, the team obtained numerous examples of how the institution develops, tracks, and utilizes student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institution level. These learning outcomes are consistent across all modes of delivery: face-to-face, online asynchronous, online synchronous, hybrid, and dual credit.

The college has developed a general education curriculum organized around seven themes and that is designed to provide all students with a base of knowledge required to be successful in today's environment. The general education or "core" curriculum is grounded in the institution's mission and clearly supports its associate degree educational offerings. The maintenance of the general education curriculum is divided between the Student

Learning and Assessment Committee (SLAC) and appropriate academic programs and faculty.

The site visit team heard faculty, staff, and administrators speak of the intense focus the institution has on student success. The College of DuPage has invested an enormous amount of resources into this effort and has created a "wrap-around" cohort of support programs that have positively impacted retention and completion.

The Assurance Argument, supported by the site visit, presented clear evidence that COD maintains accountability for the quality of its educational programs and demonstrates dedication to the process of continuous improvement through the documented evaluation of student learning – both curricular and cocurricular. The college is encouraged to document the implementation of assessment data collection and analysis processes and procedures that it has recently developed as they are implemented. COD should also periodically evaluate those processes to ensure validity and reliability are maintained. It is clear through the embedded interim report that COD is well on its way to ensuring assessment is comprehensive and carried out regularly. Faculty are beginning to be able to evaluate assessment data and are making improvements based on that evaluation.

COD demonstrated in their Assurance Argument and during the site visit, that they have the resources, structure, and employees to fulfill their mission. Their budgeting and planning processes included employees throughout the institution, administration, and Board of Trustees. Each level understood the process and how it was linked to the SLRP and its pillars. The process to support long-term planning with data tracking was also evident throughout the visit.

## **Overall Recommendations**

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### **Criteria For Accreditation**

Met

### **Sanctions Recommendation**

No Sanction

### **Pathways Recommendation**

Limited to Standard

### **Federal Compliance**

Does not require monitoring

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*