



State University of New York  
**CLINTON**  
Community College

Self-Study Presented to the Middle States  
Commission on Higher Education

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*Rediscover Clinton*

**Self-Study presented to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education**

**by**

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACE	American Council on Education	IBEW	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
ACEN	Accreditation Council for Education in Nursing	IDP	Impaired Driver program
ACT	American College Testing	IEP	Institutional Effectiveness Plan
AP	Advanced Placement	ILO	Institutional Learning Outcome
BOT	Board of Trustees	IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
CAMS	Comprehensive Academic Management System	ISIR	Institutional Student Information Record
CAP	College Advancement Program	IT	Information Technology
CCC	Clinton Community College	MSCHE	Middle States Commission on Higher Education
CCWD	Center for Community and Workforce Development	NCHC	National Collegiate Honors Council
CLEP	College Level Examination Program	NCLEX	National Council Licensure Examination
CSEA	Civil Service Employees Association	NJCAA	National Junior College Athletic Association
DL	Distance Learning	NYSED	New York State Education Department
DMV	Department of Motor Vehicles	OER	Open Educational Resources
EM	Enrollment Management	OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician	PII	Personally Identifiable Information
FA	Financial Aid	PLO	Program Learning Outcome
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid	PTECH	Pathways in Technology Early College High School
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	SAB	Student Activities Board
FSA	Faculty Student Association	SAP	Satisfactory Academic progress
FTE	Full-time Equivalent	SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test
GER	General Education Requirement	SLOAC	Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator
GPA	Grade Point Average	SUNY	State University of New York
HEERF	Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund	TCPA	Telephone Consumer Protection Act
HESC	Higher Education Services Consortium	USAFI	United States American Forces Institute
HESC	Higher Education Services Consortium	VPAA	Vice President for Academic Affairs
HR	Human Resources	VPIA	Vice President for Institutional Advancement
IAM	Institute for Advanced Manufacturing		

## Executive Summary

Clinton Community College embarked on its self-study with a clear focus on institutional improvement and innovation. The intended outcomes of this self-study, as stated in Clinton Community College's self-study design, were to:

1. Demonstrate how the College meets the MSCHE Standards for Accreditation, Requirements of Affiliation, and compliance with accreditation-relevant federal regulations.
2. Produce an in-depth and reflective document that identifies clear opportunities and strategies for continuous improvement in the attainment of the College's mission and its institutional priorities.
3. Engage all sectors of the campus community in an inclusive and transparent self-evaluation process.
4. Clarify our institutional assessment processes and effectively communicate how assessment results are used to inform planning and improvements in the overall student experience.
5. Establish a clear plan for resource allocation that will put Clinton Community College on a path toward financial sustainability.

The College is very proud of the engagement of the campus community in the self-study and the collaborative nature of the endeavor. The research conducted by the work groups revealed that significant progress has made to strengthen the institution over the last ten years, but opportunities for improvement exist. Some of the identified issues were addressed as the self-study process progressed. For example, the research revealed that some documents and procedures were in need of updating, and the College has taken steps to revise and strengthen them. Additionally, with the development of a new strategic plan, the role of the Strategic Planning Committee has been reinforced as a representative body that reviews and recommends strategic initiatives and resource allocations that align with the College mission. Below is a summary of the major findings of the analyses completed for each of the Standards for Accreditation, including identified challenges and opportunities for improvement and innovation.

**Standard I:** The Clinton Community College mission is clearly articulated and is recognized and appreciated by internal constituents and external stakeholders. The College has consistently engaged in a transparent and inclusive process of reviewing the mission, vision, and institutional goals which are clearly stated in the strategic plan and are closely aligned to the mission.

Standard I Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation:

- Operationalize a process for monitoring and reporting progress on strategic goals and core objectives of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.
- Communicate the College mission and goals more effectively and extensively to the College community and beyond.
- Ensure that all operational planning efforts are clearly driven by the College mission and closely aligned to the institutional goals as stipulated in the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

**Standard II:** Clinton Community College demonstrates that it is a campus of ethics and integrity by grounding itself in its stated mission. It is a supportive and responsive institution where academic and intellectual freedom, creative expression, and diverse perspectives are encouraged, valued, and protected by clear policies. The College strives to stay current in best practices and policies on ethics and integrity and effectively communicates its ethical expectations for conduct as well as policies and procedures to report perceived violations. The College is transparent and compliant in collecting and reporting required data as mandated by federal, state, and MSCHE regulations.

## Standard II Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation:

- Create an effective system for updating and publicizing changes in staffing, policies, and procedures.
- Review, revise, and reinstate compliance training administered by the Office of Human Resources.
- Formalize a succession planning procedure for all areas of the College to ensure comprehensive coverage.
- Consistently conduct employee exit interviews through the Office of Human Resources for enhancement of its work environment.
- Monitor and track academic and student conduct offenders with documentation of timeline for process standardization.
- Enhance diverse perspectives on campus through continued collaboration and by seeking funding to maintain and expand diversity-related initiatives.

**Standard III:** Clinton Community College provides students with learning experiences of appropriate rigor at all levels through all modes of delivery. Program and certificate offerings are responsive to student needs and are developed and modified through careful examination. Courses at the College are taught by dedicated, qualified professionals who are regularly reviewed. There are internal professional development opportunities for faculty, though finances have restricted external opportunities. Low enrollment and employee attrition have necessitated the reduction of course offerings.

## Standard III Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation:

- Reinstatement funding to the Professional Development Committee to encourage and support faculty and staff in professional development opportunities.
- Develop a Values, Ethics, and Diverse Perspectives campus-level general education requirement for all A.A. and A.S. degrees.
- Offer and enhance campus classes, events, and community-based learning contracts for Honors Program participants after pandemic restrictions are lifted.
- Formalize the College Advancement Program (CAP) Coordinator position and fill it with a dedicated hire.
- Prioritize promotions of faculty when finances allow.
- Develop a standardized peer evaluation form to be used for the renewal and tenure process for faculty.

**Standard IV:** Clinton Community College admits and serves students of varying abilities, needs, and goals. The faculty and staff are committed to student success by providing students a supportive learning environment. Procedures that support recruitment and student success are clearly defined and followed, and processes and services are planned and assessed regularly to ensure continuing support for all students. In alignment with the College's commitment to open access, students can take advantage of preparatory courses, generous credit transfer policies, and experiential learning. The shared commitment and collaboration among staff have enabled the College to maintain student services at a satisfactory level. However, student supports may become compromised if the staffing situation is not improved, especially after students return to campus post pandemic.



#### Standard IV Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation:

- Align staffing priorities with student needs for services and support.
- Promote greater consistency in advisor availability and outreach to students.
- Develop a support process for students on probation for safeguarding their path to graduation.
- Modernize the processes by which the Accommodative Services Office provides information to promote accessibility and a safe environment for students with disabilities.
- Promote the Individual Studies programs as degree completion options for students who temporarily withdraw from the College.
- Expand the assessment of athletic programs to include student feedback and a coach evaluation.
- Establish a standardized method for reviewing and documenting third-party provider contracts.
- Increase student awareness of available relief services such as the food pantry and emergency scholarships provided by the Foundation.

**Standard V:** The faculty-driven academic assessment processes at Clinton Community College have been effective in aligning institutional and educational goals, evaluating student achievement, and making use of assessment results to improve student learning experiences. Regular review and enhancement of credit and non-credit offerings ensure that all students receive a quality educational experience. The reorganization of document storage capabilities and an upgraded website have improved transparency and accessibility of assessment results. Although assessment processes are well established, dwindling human resources have hindered the efficiency of academic assessment. To maintain a high standard of educational effectiveness, several opportunities for improvement were identified to increase the consistency and sustainability of assessment practices and accessibility of assessment data.

#### Standard V Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation:

- Fill the vacancy in the Institutional Research and Planning Office.
- Store all institutional assessment information internally in one easily accessible location.
- Clearly and regularly publish assessment deadlines and dates.
- Streamline the learning outcomes assessment processes.
- Increase clerical assistance available for assessment.
- Develop a system for tracking student success in obtaining employment after graduation.

**Standard VI:** Clinton Community College is financially stable and has adequate resources to support its basic operations and core programming. The College enjoys outstanding support from its sponsor, Clinton County, and has received more than \$41 million of supplemental funding from the County and State to secure infrastructure upgrades. Institutional priorities have consistently driven decision-making which is well integrated within shared governance processes and is guided by the Strategic Planning Committee. Planning is aligned to strategic goals at both the institutional and unit level with strong support for institutional planning processes. Access to and analysis of data needed for assessment purposes is hindered by the vacancy in the Office of Institutional Research and Planning.

#### Standard VI Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation:

- Identify, prioritize, and fill key vacancies through the application of the strategic planning processes.
- Diversify and strengthen revenue streams to enhance the financial condition of the College.
- Utilize findings of the Enrollment Management Report to reverse the trend of declining enrollment.
- Create a budget advisory subcommittee in the Strategic Planning Committee to review revenue source allocations and to make recommendations on resource utilization.

**Standard VII:** Clinton Community College is governed and administered in a way that supports its mission and goals, provides an open and transparent form of administration, and embraces input from management, faculty, staff, students, and the community. The College maintains sufficient autonomy to develop and provide academic programs that serve all of its constituencies. The College has faced significant challenges from lower enrollment, unanticipated changes in state funding, and the pandemic. Despite these challenges, its leadership has improved overall functions of the College, focusing on its mission, vision, and values.

Standard VII Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation:

- Fill current administrative vacancies that are crucial for College operations as identified through the strategic planning process.
- Prepare for and communicate succession planning for vacancies.
- Review and revise current evaluation processes for positions in leadership.
- Strengthen campus-wide communication about decision-making processes.
- Establish a planning and budgeting committee to facilitate input from all campus constituencies.



# Introduction

Clinton Community College launched a comprehensive review of the College and its operations in January 2020 using the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards for Accreditation as the basis for its analysis. From the earliest stages of the self-study, the College was committed to making the process both inclusive and transparent. Internal and external constituencies were encouraged to participate in the self-study and invited to provide feedback throughout the synergistic process.

Clinton Community College employed a Standards-based approach to organize the self-study report. It was determined by way of consensus of the College President and Middle States Steering Committee members that this method would be the most feasible given the institution's size and available resources. This approach also provided continuity from the College's previous self-study document. The College organized seven work groups to carry out the comprehensive self-study. Each work group focused on one of the Standards for Accreditation and its related Requirements for Affiliation.

The chairs of the seven work groups comprised the Middle States Steering Committee. The self-study co-chairs, who also served as work group chairs, coordinated the efforts of the work groups and acted as liaisons between MSCHE representatives and the College community. The Steering Committee supported the work groups by providing the guidance and resources necessary for carrying out the work of evaluating and assessing the Commission's Standards. Work groups were composed of faculty, staff, students, and administrators. Work group membership was voluntary; however, participation in the self-study process was strongly encouraged by the College president and self-study co-chairs.

Four Institutional Priorities were collaboratively identified as part of two coinciding endeavors—preparation for the Middle States accreditation self-study and the development of a new institutional strategic plan—and were affirmed by the campus through multiple representative governance bodies. The institutional mission and priorities guided the entirety of the self-study process; however, priorities were emphasized within specific Standards as indicated below.

- Teaching, Learning, and Student Success (Standards I, III, IV, and V)
- New and Retained Student Enrollment (Standards I, II, and VI)
- Institutional Financial Sustainability (Standards I and VI)
- Educational and Employment Pathways (Standards I, III, IV, and V)

The self-study report includes a college overview; a description of how each of the Requirements of Affiliation is addressed; a section for each of the seven Middle States Standards for Accreditation; and membership lists for the Steering Committee, work groups, and Board of Trustees.

Supporting documentation for each criterion of the seven Standards for Accreditation is referenced within the self-study report using the abbreviation "EVID" followed by the Standard number, criterion number, and chronological documentation number. For example, the first piece of evidence in support of the third criterion for Standard IV would be denoted parenthetically within the report as, "(EVID: St-IV-3.1)". The filename of the artifact uploaded in the MSCHE Evidence portal includes the Standard number, criterion number, and chronological documentation number at the beginning followed by the title of the document. For example, the fifth artifact supporting Standard V, Criterion 2 has the filename, "St-V-2.5 Academic Program Review Guide".

## College Overview

Clinton Community College is part of the State University of New York (SUNY), a system of 64 campuses, 30 of which are locally sponsored community colleges. The College occupies a former resort hotel situated on a bluff overlooking Lake Champlain, in addition to three other academic buildings, two restored historic cottages, and several smaller multi-purpose buildings. The College primarily serves its rural local service area that includes Clinton, Essex, and Franklin counties in the northeast portion of New York State, which is a part of what is known as the North Country region of the state.

The College's operations are subdivided into Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, Finance, Information Technology, Institutional Advancement, Buildings and Grounds, and the Center for Community and Workforce Development (CCWD). Each area has a leadership team which participates in regular meetings throughout the year to discuss ongoing activities and needs within their respective charges. These leadership teams are overseen by the appropriate vice president, dean, or director, who heads each area of college operation.

Clinton Community College has an annual operating budget of approximately \$11 million. The governance structure at the College includes general oversight from SUNY system administration, the Clinton Community College Board of Trustees, the President, the President's Cabinet, and Faculty Council. The Strategic Planning Committee plays a key role in advising the President's Cabinet regarding major new initiatives. Clinton Community College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). The Nursing Program is registered by New York State Education Department (NYSED) Commissioner of Education, and, as such, has met the Department's standards for accreditation as provided in the Rules of the Board of Regents and the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

The mission of Clinton Community College is to provide educational opportunities in an inclusive and safe environment that empower individuals to create their own paths to personal and professional growth. In alignment with its mission, the College endeavors to make higher education accessible for all students in an inclusive learning environment. Clinton County, the fiscal sponsor of the College, is the predominant source of the College's student population although the College also serves a small number of students from outside the county area. The College's commitment to the educational needs of the local community is intentional and aligns with its vision of serving the North Country region in the hopes of enhancing the community's academic and economic growth. Clinton Community College is at the center of the region's higher education community and has developed many local partnerships that support its mission, including associations with educational institutions, businesses, industries, and organizations that serve the community-at-large. One example of this collaboration is the establishment of the Institute of Advanced Manufacturing (IAM), which opened on campus in the fall of 2017. The IAM was designed in collaboration with local industry partners for the purpose of providing education and training that aligns with the local workforce and economic needs. The Institute hosts the College's technology associate degree and certificate programs as well as its workforce trainings. The creation of the IAM was a notable economic development initiative in Clinton County, which is the center of a manufacturing and transportation industries cluster that require an educated and skilled workforce in the growing advanced manufacturing field.

The College's deep commitment to its local community is also conveyed in its dedication to students, who receive much needed personal attention from both faculty and student services staff. Clinton Community College opened in 1969 with an enrollment of 260 students. At its peak enrollment time between 2009-11, the College had around 2000 students; it currently serves approximately 1200 students annually with about 44% of the student population coming from the concurrent enrollment program. In Fall 2020, 86% of students were residents of Clinton County and 94% were from the College's New York State North Country Region. The New York City metropolitan region comprised 2% of student enrollment during this time, and 2% of the College's enrollments came from outside of the North Country and metropolitan New York. The College has minimal out-

of-state enrollment, most of which is from neighboring Vermont and totaled less than 2% during the 2020-2021 academic year. Lastly, like many institutions, the College's international student enrollment has declined in recent years, dropping from a high of 34 enrolled international students in Fall 2013 to only one in Fall 2020. The Fall 2019 first to second year retention rates of first-time degree seeking students at the College was 58% for full-time students and 38% for part-time students. Graduation rates of full-time, first-time degree seeking students, based on the 2016 cohort, was 16% for two years, 29% for three years, and 32% for four years.

The majority of Clinton Community College's matriculated students come from rural or low socioeconomic status families. More than half are part-time students, with many working while attending college. Based on 2020 FAFSA information, over half are defined as economically disadvantaged due to factors out of their control. This group includes students with disabilities and students who are neglected or homeless. Many entering students do not have sufficient English or math proficiency for college level coursework and must take remedial coursework. Also, because of their rural setting, a significant portion of students do not have access to reliable technology or internet service at home. Acknowledging these realities, the College is committed to structuring its operations, processes, and teaching in adaptive ways to accommodate students and eliminate as many barriers as possible.

The College has experienced enrollment declines of 23.5% over the past three years and 35% over five years, resulting in a Fall 2020 total headcount of 1035, which includes students in the concurrent enrollment program. This decline in enrollment coupled with other external factors, such as the introduction of the New York State Excelsior Scholarship and reductions in state allocations, has created a significant financial challenge for the institution. The College has taken several steps to mitigate the negative financial impact of these adverse trends including a voluntary, incentivized retirement program and the sale of the dormitories.

Strong financial support from the College's sponsor, Clinton County, which has increased over the past three years, has been a major factor in moving the College to a much better financial position. The Clinton Community College Foundation is providing financial resources to the College by funding salaries for 1.5 staff persons, scholarships for students, and operational support. New York State and Clinton County have collectively invested 23 million dollars over the past four years to fund the new Institute for Advanced Manufacturing building, considered the gold standard for such facilities, a new Learning Commons with highly integrated academic support services, and the major renovation of the Moore Building, which houses the College administrative offices and a high proportion of the classrooms. As part of this project, the installation of over 500 energy efficient windows will reduce energy costs by approximately 30% beginning in the fall of 2021.

In March 2020, Clinton Community College, like institutions throughout the country, was faced with immediate and unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When the governor of New York mandated that all non-essential workers stay home to help stop the spread of the novel coronavirus (New York State on PAUSE), the College's resourcefulness and commitment to its students were never more evident. Days prior to the statewide closure, the College's leadership team and several faculty representatives met to determine the best course of action for the College to take. Academic and student service departments devised continuity plans which outlined the measures to be taken to ensure the sustained delivery of educational and support services. In addition to the obvious challenges of transitioning ground-based coursework and services to remote delivery in a very short period of time, the repercussions of the pandemic and consequent shift in course delivery on many students, such as significant changes in income, well-being, or family and work responsibilities, and limited or no access to a computer or the internet, weighed heavily on the faculty and staff. Adaptability and creativity were essential to carrying out the College mission in the face of this new reality. Faculty members employed a number of remote delivery options including proprietary and open-source learning platforms, online synchronous group meetings (e.g., Zoom, Teams), recorded video lessons, email, and even phone conversations. When the campus closed to all in-person functions, all offices, including Accommodative Services, Admissions, Counseling and Advisement, Financial Aid, Information Technology, Library, and Registrar, continued to support students, conducting their business by phone, email, and virtual meetings. The Tutoring Center was fully staffed

and assisted students using Zoom. Academic advisement took place remotely, with advisors using similar methods to connect with their assigned advisees.

Committee work also persisted despite the challenges presented by the pandemic. The Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, Academic Council, Faculty Council, Strategic Planning Committee, Middle States Steering Committee, Academic Support Team, and governance committees, among others, continued to meet regularly to carry out the important business of the College. The College worked closely with its concurrent enrollment partners in the high schools to provide guidance about course delivery, assessment, and final grades.

Grants from New York State and the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) awarded in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have provided financial support to the College and its students. However, the magnitude of the impact of the pandemic on future student enrollment and associated revenue is not yet clear. The College continues to look forward and plan strategically for the future of the institution. It is anticipated that the campus will transition to pre-pandemic activities in Fall 2021, but the College remains cautious and is prepared to change its protocols in response to updated SUNY and local health department guidelines.

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## Requirements of Affiliation

To be eligible for, to achieve, and to maintain Middle States Commission on Higher Education accreditation, an institution must demonstrate that it fully meets the following Requirements of Affiliation. Compliance is expected to be continuous and will be validated periodically, typically at the time of institutional self-study and during any other evaluation of the institution's compliance. Once eligibility is established, an institution then must demonstrate on an ongoing basis that it meets the Standards for Accreditation.

- 1. The institution is authorized or licensed to operate as a postsecondary educational institution and to award postsecondary degrees; it provides written documentation demonstrating both.**

Clinton Community College is authorized to operate as a postsecondary educational institution and to award postsecondary degrees by the authority of the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the State University of New York (SUNY). This information is documented on the NYSED.gov website under the Office of Higher Education: New York State College and University Campuses. (EVID: Req1)

- 2. The institution is operational, with students actively enrolled in its degree programs.**

The Fall 2021 opening enrollment at Clinton Community College includes a student headcount of xxxx, of which 445 are degree-seeking students. (EVID: Req2)

- 3. For institutions pursuing Candidacy or Initial Accreditation, the institution will graduate at least one class before the evaluation team visit for initial accreditation takes place, unless the institution can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Commission that the lack of graduates does not compromise its ability to demonstrate that students have achieved appropriate learning outcomes.**

Not applicable.

- 4. The institution's representatives communicate with the Commission in English, both orally and in writing.**

All written documentation submitted to the Commission, including current and prior self-study documents, periodic review reports, responses to Commission recommendations, and annual updates, have been communicated in English. All oral communication with the campus liaison and other Commission representatives is in English. (EVID: Req4)

- 5. The institution complies with all applicable government (usually Federal and state) laws and regulations.**

Clinton Community College complies with all Federal and New York State laws and regulations. Verification of compliance is provided in the Institutional Federal Compliance Report (Standard II, Criterion 8). Student consumer information is made public on the College website. (EVID: Req5.1) Information about Federal and state financial aid policies is available on the Tuition and Aid page of the College website. (EVID: Req5.2)

- 6. The institution complies with applicable Commission, interregional, and inter-institutional policies.**

Clinton Community College complies with all applicable Commission policies. Verification of compliance is provided in the Institutional Federal Compliance Report (Standard II, Criterion 8). Information addressing this requirement is also found in the section on Standard II: Ethics and Integrity. (EVID: Req6)

- 7. The institution has a mission statement and related goals, approved by its governing board, that defines its purposes within the context of higher education.**

Information addressing this requirement is contained in the section on Standard I: Mission and Goals. (EVID: Req7)

**8. The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes.**

Information addressing this requirement is contained in the sections on Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience; Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience; Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment; and Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement. (EVID: Req8)

**9. The institution's student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment of student achievement throughout the educational offerings, regardless of certificate or degree level or delivery and instructional modality.**

Information addressing this requirement is contained in the sections on Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience and Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment. (EVID: Req9)

**10. Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.**

Information addressing this requirement is contained in the sections on Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience; Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience; Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment; and Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement. (EVID: Req10)

**11. The institution has documented financial resources, funding base, and plans for financial development, including those from any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership) adequate to support its educational purposes and programs and to ensure financial stability. The institution demonstrates a record of responsible fiscal management, has a prepared budget for the current year, and undergoes an external financial audit on an annual basis.**

Information addressing this requirement is contained in the section on Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement. (EVID: Req11)

**12. The institution fully discloses its legally constituted governance structure(s) including any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership). The institution's governing body is responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and for ensuring that the institution's mission is being accomplished.**

Information addressing this requirement is contained in the section on Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration. (EVID: Req12)

**13. A majority of the institution's governing body's members have no employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution. The governing body adheres to a conflict of interest policy that assures that those interests are disclosed and that they do not interfere with the impartiality of governing body members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution. The institution's district/system or other chief executive officer shall not serve as the chair of the governing body.**

Information addressing this requirement is contained in the sections on Standard II: Ethics and Integrity and Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration. (EVID: Req13)

**14. The institution and its governing body/bodies make freely available to the Commission accurate, fair, and complete information on all aspects of the institution and its operations. The governing body/bodies ensure that the institution describes itself in comparable and consistent terms to all of its accrediting and**

**regulatory agencies, communicates any changes in accredited status, and agrees to disclose information (including levels of governing body compensation, if any) required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.**

Clinton Community College agrees to make freely available to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education accurate, fair, and complete information about the institution and its operations and disclose any additional information required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities. Information about Clinton Community College's Middle States and nursing program accreditation status is publicly available on its website. (EVID: Req14)

**15. The institution has a core of faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals with sufficient responsibility to the institution to assure the continuity and coherence of the institution's educational programs.**

Information addressing this requirement is contained in the section on Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience. (EVID: Req15)

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**Standard I:  
Mission and Goals**



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## Standard I: Mission and Goals

*“The institution’s mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.”* (Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards for Accreditation, Standard I)

### Overview

Clinton Community College was founded in 1969 and, in 1970, adopted a statement of purpose as the guiding principle of the College. In 1975 the Clinton Community College Board of Trustees approved a statement of philosophy, and in 1989 this statement was expanded with the addition of a mission statement. In the years since the development and approval of the College’s first mission statement, modifications have been made to the mission statement in response to changing and emerging needs in the local community, changes in student demographics, and evolving societal and educational imperatives. Extensive review of the College mission statement and core values occurred in 2006 but without significant implementation of review outcomes due to changes in executive leadership, and again in an 18-month period beginning in 2009 during which a new mission statement, core values, and strategic goals aligned to the institutional priorities were established and approved by the Board of Trustees. Subsequent modification of the College mission statement, core values, and strategic goals occurred in 2017 in tandem with the development of the 2017-2020 strategic plan for the College. The mission statement and core values were kept unchanged in 2019 as part of the strategic planning process initiated to craft a new strategic plan for 2020-2025. A new set of goals was established with strong alignment to the institutional priorities set for this self-study and listed as follows:

- Teaching, Learning, and Student Success
- New and Retained Student Enrollment
- Institutional Financial Sustainability
- Educational and Employment Pathways

Throughout its history, the College’s clearly defined mission remains at the heart of its identity, forming the foundation for strategic planning, assessment, resource allocation, and goal setting. Clinton Community College’s mission, vision, and core values drive the College’s overarching purpose to provide a high-quality education with access and opportunity for students of diverse needs, academic goals, and personal aspirations.

### College Mission

The mission of Clinton Community College is to provide educational opportunities in an inclusive and safe environment that empower individuals to create their own paths to personal and professional growth.

### College Vision

As a result of our efforts in Clinton County and the North Country, Clinton Community College helps students bridge academic, economic, technological, and cultural divides, participate in local and global communities, and enhance their lives in practical and visionary ways.

### Core Values

In order to provide the highest quality educational experiences and maintain a welcoming environment to all students, faculty and staff, Clinton Community College holds the following core values that we express in all that we do as a college community:

### **Success/Quality**

The highly qualified faculty and staff at Clinton Community College continually deliver strong and diverse career- and transfer-relevant educational programs. Institutional engagement, small class size, and integrated student support provide for effective individualized attention to students which focuses on their personal goal attainment and culminating in their graduation.

### **Respect**

Clinton Community College is dedicated to the respect of all community members by continually working to create a positive organizational atmosphere. Respecting diversity, maintaining a safe learning environment, and engaging in communication based on transparency and inclusiveness are hallmarks of the College's organizational culture.

### **Access**

Clinton Community College offers opportunity for study to students from diverse demographic backgrounds in Clinton County and beyond. Access to academic programs, courses, and training is enhanced by the College's level of preparedness, dedicated technology for teaching and learning, and affordability of attendance.

### **Region**

Clinton Community College has a strong partnership with its sponsor, Clinton County, and a plethora of local and regional businesses, agencies, and educational institutions. These strong community partnerships are essential for building and maintaining a strong workforce development capacity.

## **Reaffirmation of Mission and Vision and Development of Strategic Goals**

Clinton Community College periodically engages the entire College community and external stakeholders in reviewing the mission statement, vision, core values, and strategic goals as part of the strategic planning process. The current, newly-implemented strategic plan, [Clinton Community College Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#), was drafted by the Strategic Planning Committee and after a purposefully inclusive and transparent process of review by internal constituents and external stakeholders was approved by the Board of Trustees in November 2020. During this plan development process, the College mission and core values were approved as unchanged from the preceding mission review and strategic planning period which occurred in 2017, and a new set of strategic goals was established.

### **Strategic Goals for 2020-2025**

- Provide dynamic and innovative learning experiences through quality teaching that lead to success of students in achieving educational, career, and personal enrichment goals.
- Stabilize student enrollment by adapting to changing institutional environment, addressing critical resource needs, and implementing a highly integrated approach to student retention.
- Build and maintain effective and efficient operational systems with strategically guided resource allocation and data-informed decision making.
- Maintain and expand partnerships and collaborations with businesses, agencies, and educational institutions to diversify options for students for career placement or advancement.

## Assessment of Strategic Plan Progress and Goal Achievement

Institutional progress on the [Clinton Community College Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#) is being monitored by the Strategic Planning Committee. Specific action plans are being developed by the appropriate organizational units in consultation with the Strategic Planning Committee. These action plans will be designed to address core objectives in the strategic plan by identifying data needed to measure progress on performance indicators and establishing timelines for achieving outcomes. Institutional progress on the core objectives for each key strategy will be assessed by the Strategic Planning Committee on an annual basis using performance indicator data. Performance reports will be compiled by the Strategic Planning Committee and submitted to the President for distribution to the full College community and Board of Trustees on an annual basis. Performance updates will also be provided to the President's Cabinet, Faculty Council, and the Board of Trustees on a more frequent basis as needed or requested.

## Mission and Goals: Evolution and Adaptation

The mission of Clinton Community College is to provide educational opportunities in an inclusive and safe environment that empower individuals to create their own paths to personal and professional growth (EVID: St-I-1.1). This mission statement clearly and intentionally reflects the comprehensive and functional purpose of the College since its inception which is to provide access for the local population to high quality educational programs as pathways to careers, a means to personal or professional growth, or as a foundation for continued study at the baccalaureate level. The mission, strategic goals, and integrated core values of success, quality, respect, access, and region guide the institution in all its defining functions and are integrated into the organizational life of the College.

The development of the College mission statement, vision, core values, and strategic goals has consistently followed a pathway of inclusiveness and transparency. The strategic plan development process as described in the newly implemented strategic plan, [Clinton Community College Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#), provides clear evidence of an "appropriate collaborative participation by all who facilitate or are otherwise responsible for institutional development and improvement". This process is consistent with what was utilized in the previous periods of strategic plan development and mission review and affirmation, specifically those occurring in 2006, 2009-2010, and 2017.

During the fall of 2019, the executive leadership at Clinton Community College began the process of engaging with internal constituents and external stakeholders to craft a new strategic plan for 2020 through 2025. The President formally charged the Strategic Planning Committee, a representative group of faculty, staff, and administrators, with the responsibility for developing the new strategic plan. At the onset of the plan development process, the existing mission, vision, and core values were reaffirmed. The first step taken by the Strategic Planning Committee was identifying, vetting, and endorsing the institutional priorities in October of 2019. After securing campus-wide approval, these priorities became the framework for the new strategic plan, anchored by the mission and values.

The Strategic Planning Committee next engaged the campus community in the development of the new plan. During the opening day meeting for the Spring 2020 semester, all College employees and trustees were invited to participate in a group planning activity. Each group was asked to list strategies for addressing the institutional priorities. The Strategic Planning Committee compiled the responses and then began the lengthy process of categorizing and streamlining the ideas generated by the groups. After several extensive brainstorming sessions, the Strategic Planning Committee utilized the categorized ideas to develop a draft of the goals, associated key strategies, and core objectives within the framework of the institutional priorities. Committee members solicited input from colleagues in their respective organizational units in a highly collaborative manner to maintain an inclusive process of plan development.

According to the original timeline, the plan was to be presented to the Student Senate, Board of Trustees, and faculty and staff during April and May of 2020, but due to the disruptions to the school year caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Strategic Planning Committee had to temporarily suspend its meetings and adjust the development timeline. The Committee switched to virtual meetings and email communication to continue working on the draft document. During April and May of 2020, the Committee continued to review the emerging draft, focusing on refinement of key strategies and core objectives. The Committee met in May in virtual fashion to identify key performance indicators aligned to the core objectives for planned assessment of progress on the strategic plan upon implementation. The strategic plan draft with strategic goals, key strategies, core objectives, and key performance indicators was reviewed by the Board of Trustees for additional input, comments, and suggested modifications. The draft plan was shared with members of the entire College community at the start of the Fall 2020 semester via email, and key elements of the plan were presented at a virtual campus meeting. All College constituents were invited to provide input, comments, and suggestions for the draft plan on the College website. The plan was presented to and approved by the Faculty Council on November 18, 2020 and was subsequently approved by the Clinton Community College Board of Trustees on November 24, 2020 (EVID: St-I-1.2). Thus, by these actions, the College met the MSCHE requirement that the mission and goals “are approved and supported by the governing body”.

The entire mission and goals review process that was utilized for developing the current strategic plan is consistent with the process utilized in previous review efforts. The emphasis on transparency and participatory inclusion of all institutional sectors will continue to be the foundational basis for future mission and strategic plan review endeavors.

### **Mission and Goals: Central to Institutional Progress**

The provision of educational opportunities in an inclusive and safe environment, as stipulated in the mission statement, requires a consistent and effective collaboration of all organizational sectors of the institution including the faculty, staff providing support services, and administration. In addition, provision of these opportunities is enhanced by sound partnership and cooperation with external stakeholders, especially businesses and organizations which provide internship and clinical experiences, institutions with which the College has articulation agreements for seamless transfer upon program completion, and industry partners for whom the College provides workforce training. Thus, the College mission “addresses external as well as internal contexts and constituencies”. Furthermore, all four of the strategic goals achieve this same purpose with one goal explicitly referencing the “maintenance and enhancement of partnerships and collaborations with businesses, agencies and educational institutions to diversify options for students for career placement or advancement”. In addition, under the strategic goal focused on learning and teaching, there is the key strategy of providing meaningful learning experiences with a core objective to “broaden the use of relevant applied learning experiences such as internships, field experiences, and job shadowing.” Most notable examples of program delivery being reliant upon and enhanced by partnership with external constituencies are the Associate of Applied Science degree programs in Nursing (EVID: St-I-1.3), Human Services (EVID: St-I-1.4), and Computer Information Systems (EVID: St-I-1.5), all of which have clinical or internship components built into the curriculum. Additional programs like Criminal Justice, Accounting, and Mechanical Technology have optional internship opportunities for students.

The strategic plan with specified goals, strategies, and objectives, is inherently designed to guide the institution in meeting its mission and achieving its vision. The [2020-2025 Strategic Plan](#) clearly reveals a unified intent to “guide faculty, administration, staff and governing structures in making decisions related to planning, resource allocation, program and curricular development, and the definition of institutional and educational outcomes”. For example, under the strategic goal to “Build and maintain effective and efficient operational systems with strategically guided resource allocation and data-informed decision making,” there is a specific key strategy to “align allocation of financial resources to strategic plan initiatives.” Evidence for the role of mission and goals in guiding program development, resource allocation, and planning are found in the meeting minutes of the



President’s cabinet, Strategic Planning Committee, Curriculum Committee, Academic Standards Committee, and academic departments. The vetting of new program proposals by the sponsoring academic department, Curriculum Committee, Faculty Council, and President’s Cabinet includes consideration of resource availability for implementing new programs as a key decision-making factor. Actions taken by the Clinton Community College Foundation in providing financial support to students and the College, presidential efforts to solicit support from the county legislature, private contributors, and the Chamber of Commerce, and media reports of support thus garnered are evidence of mission-driven resource allocation. The narrative in various grant applications such as in the SUNY Performance Improvement Fund and the SUNY Strong Start to Finish grant and project reports on grant activities also provide evidence of mission and goals driving resource planning and allocation (EVID: St-I-1.6).

The College’s support for scholarly inquiry and creative activity at all levels is guided by the [2020-2025 Strategic Plan](#), specifically under the goal to “provide dynamic and innovative learning experiences through quality teaching that lead to success of students in achieving educational, career and personal enrichment goals.” A key strategy under this goal is to “strengthen institutional commitment to professional development.” Inherent in this strategy is the drive to support scholarly and creative work, specifically in applied settings. One example of such applied research is the collaboration of Technology Department faculty with research scientists in developing a fuel spill catcher for boats for the intended purpose of reducing fuel spill pollution of Lake Champlain. Challenges in addressing this criterion in a broad ranging manner are resource constraints for supporting professional development and the absence of a defined research component in faculty work, which is characteristic of the community college sector across the higher education landscape.

**Mission and Goals: Visibility and Relevancy**

The Clinton Community College mission, vision, core values, and strategic goals are publicly available on its website. Promotion of the mission and goals occurs through explicit articulation of these in key documents such as the catalog, the strategic plan, and promotional and recruitment materials. The College instituted the administrative practice of posting the mission and institutional priorities, which form the basis of the strategic goals, on the agendas and minutes of all organizational meetings (EVID: St-I-1.7). The purpose of this initiative was to broadly communicate the mission and goals to the College community.

The level of familiarity with the mission and goals amongst constituents was determined with a survey of faculty and staff done in February of 2021. Analysis of the responses to the questionnaire revealed that nearly 80% of all 48 survey participants perceived that they knew the mission very well or moderately well, whereas only one respondent did not know the mission at all (Table 1).

**Table 1: Participant Knowledge of College Mission**

Response	Frequency	Percent of Total
Very well	16	33.34
Moderately well	22	45.83
Only vaguely	9	18.75
Not at all	1	2.08
Total respondents	48	

The highest percentage of respondents reported finding the mission statement on the College website, in the strategic plan, and in the College catalog (Table 2).

**Table 2: Location Where Participants Had Found the College Mission Statement**

Response	Frequency*	Percent of Total
College catalog	25	52.08
College website	37	77.08
Meeting agendas/minutes	19	39.58
Bulletin boards	12	25.00
College letterhead	2	4.17
Strategic plan	29	60.42
Never looked for it	4	8.33
Other	3	6.25
Total respondents	48	

\*Includes possible multiple responses per participant.

The survey also revealed that about 77% of respondents perceived that they knew the College goals very well or moderately well, whereas only one did not know the goals at all (Table 3).

**Table 3: Participant Knowledge of College Goals**

Response	Frequency	Percent of Total
Very well	10	20.83
Moderately well	27	56.25
Only vaguely	10	20.83
Not at all	1	2.08
Total respondents	48	

The highest percentage of respondents reported finding the College goals on the College website and in the strategic plan (Table 4).

**Table 4: Location Where Participants Had Found the College Goals**

Response	Frequency*	Percent of Total
College catalog	10	20.83
College website	30	62.50
Meeting agendas/minutes	9	18.75
Bulletin boards	4	8.33
College letterhead	0	0.00
Strategic plan	30	62.50
Never looked for it	7	14.58
Other	3	6.25
Total respondents	48	

\*Includes possible multiple responses per participant.

On a less positive note, less than half of the survey participants perceived that the mission and goals are communicated effectively and extensively to the College community (Table 5).

**Table 5: Communication of Mission and Goals to the College Community**

Response	Frequency	Percent of Total
Extensively and effectively	22	46.81
Only sporadically and ineffectively	22	46.81
Not at all	3	6.38
Total respondents	47	



The mission and goals are periodically reviewed and evaluated, primarily during the development of the strategic plan. Minutes from the Strategic Planning Committee and Board of Trustees meetings and the College [Institutional Effectiveness Plan](#) provide evidence of this review process. Extensive review of the mission statement and core values occurred in 2006 but without significant implementation of review outcomes due to changes in executive leadership, and again in 2009-2010 during which a new mission statement, core values, and strategic goals aligned to the institutional priorities were established and approved by the Board of Trustees. Modification of the mission statement, core values, and strategic goals occurred in 2017 during the development of the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan. The mission statement and core values were reaffirmed in 2019 as part of the strategic planning process initiated to craft a new strategic plan for 2020-2025. A new set of strategic goals was established with the goals having a very strong alignment to the institutional priorities.

A major objective of these inclusive and transparent review efforts was to determine if the institutional goals are “realistic, appropriate to higher education and consistent with the mission”. Each of the four goals focuses on a key defining function of high education: learning and teaching, enrollment, operational management, and collaboration with external partners. In addition, the goals are closely aligned to and derived from the institutional priorities which all link to the mission. Success in achieving the mission to “provide educational opportunities in an inclusive and safe environment that empower individuals to create their own paths to personal and professional growth” requires careful, collective attention to the key strategies and objectives under each strategic goal (EVID: St-I-2.1).

The [Institutional Effectiveness Plan](#) documents the purposeful alignment of unit or department goals to those of the strategic plan and presents the mechanism for assessing achievement of these goals. The strategic plan includes a monitoring framework for assessing progress on strategic goals. An additional source of evidence for assessment of mission and goals is the Strategic Planning Procedure Manual, which guides processes related to the mission and goals. This manual is a key tool for implementation of the strategic plan and for also monitoring progress on achieving the goals and core objectives of the plan (EVID: St-I-4.1).

### **Goals: Tools for Functional Integration and Improvement**

The four strategic goals provide the organizational framework for integrating the academic, administrative, and student support sectors in fulfilling the mission. These goals are clearly focused on student learning and related outcomes as well as on institutional improvement (EVID: St-I-3.1). The goal to “provide dynamic and innovative learning experiences through quality teaching that lead to success of students in achieving educational, career and personal enrichment goals” clearly points to the defining core functions of the College, the teaching and learning endeavors. This goal is explicitly centered on student learning and related outcomes (EVID: St-I-3.2). The goal to “stabilize student enrollment by adapting to a changing institutional environment, addressing critical resource needs, and implementing a highly integrated approach to student retention” is also focused on student learning but with an emphasis on enhancing outcomes related to retention. Achieving this goal will also result in institutional improvement in the areas of resource utilization and student retention. The goal to “build and maintain effective and efficient operational systems with strategically guided resource allocation and data-informed decision making” is clearly associated with institutional improvement through operational enhancement and strategic resource utilization. The goal to “maintain and expand partnerships and collaborations with businesses, agencies, and educational institutions to diversify options for students for career placement or advancement” provides a student learning benefit through creation and implementation of internship experiences, workforce training opportunities, and seamless transfer for continuation of study and in achieving this benefit, will also result in institutional improvement.

The strategic goals are consistent with the mission in that each of the goals has a direct relationship to the core function of the College, teaching and learning. The mission clearly speaks to this core function in terms of “providing educational opportunities” which to be achieved, requires keen organizational attention to and attainment of all four goals. This outcome is possible only with the full participation of and support from

administrative, educational, and student support programs and services. The monitoring plan for the [2020-2025 Strategic Plan](#) presents a framework for such inclusive participation by these sectors.












## Conclusion

Clinton Community College's mission is clearly articulated and is recognized and appreciated across campus, within the local community, and at the state level for its principal purpose of guiding organizational life and institutional functions at the College. Institutional goals are clearly stated in the strategic plan and are closely aligned to the mission. The College has consistently engaged in a transparent and inclusive process of reviewing the mission, vision, and institutional goals concurrent with the development of each strategic plan over the past twelve years during which three strategic plans were implemented.

## Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation

- Operationalize a process for monitoring and reporting progress on strategic goals and core objectives of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.
- Communicate the College mission and goals more effectively and extensively to the College community and beyond.
- Ensure that all operational planning efforts are clearly driven by the College mission and closely aligned to the institutional goals as stipulated in the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

## Standard I Supporting Documents

-  St-I-1.1 Mission, Vision, and Values Statements
-  St-I-1.2 BOT Resolution No 16 (11-24-2020 BOT Minutes)
-  St-I-1.3 Nursing A.A.S Webpage
-  St-I-1.4 Human Services A.A.S. Webpage
-  St-I-1.5 Computer Information Systems A.A.S. Webpage
-  St-I-1.6 Clinton Strong Start To Finish Grant Scope of Work
-  St-I-1.7 Examples--Agendas Displaying Mission and Priorities
-  St-I-2.1 2020-2025 CCC Strategic Plan (pp.4-11)
-  St-I-3.1 Institutional Strategic Goals
-  St-I-3.2 Institutional Learning Outcomes
-  St-I-4.1 Strategic Planning Procedure Manual 2020-2025

## Standard II: Ethics and Integrity



## Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

*"Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully."* (Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards for Accreditation, Standard II)

### Overview

Clinton Community College demonstrates its commitment to being an institution of integrity by clearly communicating and modeling its ethical touchstones to all internal constituents and external stakeholders. The College establishes and follows written policies and procedures specific to being an ethical institution and then reports fully its adherence and assurance that engagement and communication with Clinton Community College will be honest, respectful, and impartial in its practices. All activities of the College are anchored to the mission, which states that Clinton Community College will "provide educational opportunities in an inclusive and safe environment".

### A Campus Culture of Respect and Ethical Conduct

Students at Clinton Community College are informed of the College's commitment to ethics and expectation for ethical conduct starting with student orientation scheduled prior to the beginning of each academic semester. Full details of the orientation sessions are discussed in the section on Standard IV. Orientation topics cover several areas of the [Clinton Community College Student Handbook](#), which details expectations for ethical behavior promoting a climate of respect. Orientation leaders review policies such as the Student Bill of Rights, Statement of Affirmative Action, Student Code of Conduct, and Rules and Regulations for the Maintenance of Public Order (EVID: St-II-2.1). Students are also made aware of fully articulated policies and procedures for reporting grievances and concerns published in the Student Handbook, on the College website (EVID: St-II-3.1), and in the College catalog (EVID: St-II-3.2). These grievance policies include Policy on Domestic /Intimate Partner Violence and Stalking, Sexual Violence Response Policy, Sexual Harassment Response and Prevention Policy, Amnesty Policy for Cases Involving Physical or Sexual Violence, and Bias and Hate Crime Prevention (EVID: St-II-3.3). The College documents that students are aware of the Student Handbook and the process for reporting concerns by requiring each student to sign an acknowledgment form (EVID: St-II-3.4). In addition, orientation sessions confirm that students are aware of funding sources so they can make informed financial decisions. The orientation organizers demonstrate the "My Billing" menu in the Student Portal so students see where to view their bill and find the forms needed to complete the billing process. The location for receiving notifications about financial aid application status is also displayed.

In Fall 2020, a task force was formed from the Communication Council to review and update the 2019 Policies and Procedures Manual specific to the Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics. This comprehensive review is an example of the College's ongoing commitment to revisit current policies to keep them reflective of best practices and provide opportunities to improve its internal communication. The revised Code of Ethics Policy and Procedure was approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2021 (EVID: St-II-9.1).

### Respect for Diverse Perspectives

As stated in the Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2017-2020, "Clinton Community College is committed to providing educational opportunities that enrich minds and prepare individuals to meet the challenges of an evolving workforce and global society." (EVID: St-II-2.2).

The commitment to enhance understanding of cultural diversity and to encourage diverse ideas on campus continues even though internal staffing and funding have decreased in several areas. The reduction in the number of admission counselors and support staff and a cut in funding for national/international recruitment of



faculty and students have limited campus cultural diversity. Additionally, Clinton Community College lost a valuable resource to promote experiences bringing together people of diverse backgrounds and viewpoints resulting from the sale of its residential halls in 2019.

While challenged, Clinton Community College is creative and responsive. In 2017, after having received informal recommendations from students, faculty, and staff, the Director of Human Resources determined the need to form a Diversity and Inclusion Committee to undertake initiatives to provide gender neutral restrooms and update the signage as directed and supported by SUNY. The committee sponsored "Diversity Week" programs in Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2019, and Spring 2020. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee is an additional layer of oversight provided by the College's compliance officers managing Title IX and accommodative services, as well as diversity development and trainings led by the Office of Human Resources and sponsorship and support of events by the Faculty Council's Cultural Affairs Committee (EVID: St-II-2.3). When the Cultural Affairs Committee lost funding in 2016 thereby reducing its role in planning cultural events, the Student Activities Board (SAB) embraced finding speakers, performers, and entertainment acts that highlight differing viewpoints and experiences for the students (EVID: St-II-2.4). This speaks directly to the College's ability to assess and respond to change to maintain the integrity of diverse and inclusive programming. The SAB members attend collaborative booking events that enable multiple campuses to pool resources and coordinate schedules to bring performers to our rural campus. The Douglas Library staff enhances campus diversity events with displays from the College's collection and provides supplemental reading lists to instructors to complement inclusion themes. The annual campus publication of *Cliffhanger: A Literary and Arts Magazine* featuring original student work and designated art gallery spaces on campus provide opportunities for creative, safe expression of ideas and subject matter. In 2018, the College collaborated with the Center for Community Engagement at SUNY Plattsburgh as a community partner when the Center was awarded the National Endowment of the Arts-BIG READ grant which featured Native American culture in the bestselling book, *The Round House*.

These efforts support Clinton Community College's Diversity and Inclusion Plan, which articulates the institution's commitment to prepare students for meeting the challenges of working in a "global society", and the College's vision statement, which emphasizes its role in bridging "cultural divides" and advancing "participation in 'global communities'" (EVID: St-II-2.5). The importance the College places on diverse perspectives is also captured in Institutional Learning Outcome 7– Global Awareness and Cultural Sensitivity as detailed in the section on Standard III (EVID: St-II-2.6). The Douglas Library staff regularly hosts Banned Book reading events, where interested faculty, students, and administrators take part in reading from censored works and emphasize the importance of intellectual freedom and freedom of expression. The campus recognized the need to adapt delivery of inclusion and diversity programming in 2020-2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic restricting on-campus events. The Student Activities Board promoted and shared links to virtual events and speakers on other campuses as well as opportunities in the local community. The 2019 Campus Climate Survey showed an increase to 40% of respondents agreeing that diversity is valued on campus compared to 25% agreeing it was valued in 2016, reflecting both that internal respondents value diversity and inclusion programming and that diversity is increasingly important to internal respondents. Through words and actions, the College has created an environment that fosters respect among its constituents, but there is opportunity to expand and enhance diverse perspectives on campus. Within the SUNY system, there are several system-wide initiatives, mandates, and resource opportunities speaking to the need for increased perspective and understanding. The Dean of Student Affairs is a member of SUNY Chief Diversity Officers, a group which meets to discuss initiatives championed by SUNY's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, thus providing the College with current best practices and ideas for implementation (EVID: St-II-2.7). A climate of collaboration among SUNY campuses, academic disciplines, student activities/clubs, and partnerships with external organizations in the local community is key to remaining strong and excelling as a campus that respects and fosters diversity when internal resources are limited.

Clinton Community College is vigilant about addressing behaviors and choices that may reflect bias or judgement or make another member of the campus community uncomfortable by unacceptable behavior or

conduct as detailed in the Student Handbook and Diversity and Inclusion Policy in 2019 College Policies and Procedure Manual. This requires that Clinton Community College be responsive to change. Faculty Council voted in 2019 to approve inclusion of gender pronoun usage for consideration in the course syllabus template. Gender pronoun usage was also recommended for inclusion in the email footer for each staff and faculty member (EVID: St-II-2.8).

Clinton Community College encourages students to express themselves and feels strongly that diverse student voices need to be featured in campus decision making. Student voices are heard through representatives serving on the Student Senate, which is described in the Student Handbook as, “dedicated students who are elected each academic year to serve as a collective voice for the general student body.” Students are empowered to initiate clubs, activities, and events by bringing proposals directly to the Student Senate for consideration. Students are also given voice at multiple levels of decision making at Clinton Community College including representation on the Board of Trustees, Faculty Council committees, Communication Council, and SUNY Chancellor Awards of Excellence committees.

### **Academic and Intellectual Freedom Policies**

Freedom to create and express comes with the expectation of respect and responsibility to protect intellectual property and original content. Clinton Community College protects intellectual property in policies specific to academics as written in Article VI of the Faculty Association contract, which provides the right to academic and intellectual freedom for faculty on campus (EVID: St-II-1.1). The faculty and Office of the VPAA closely monitor adherence to the contract protecting intellectual property rights. Protecting intellectual content is core to the teaching faculty at Clinton. As faculty members retire or new faculty are scheduled to teach courses offered on campus in a variety of delivery formats, the intellectual property is protected unless material was developed as Open Educational Resource (OER) materials, or the permission of the instructor or author is obtained.

The Information Technology Acceptable Use Standard as stated in the 2019 College Policies and Procedure Manual emphasizes that, “Clinton Community College provides its students and employees wide access to information resources and technologies. With the advent of new forms of technology, the College has recognized that making technological resources more accessible furthers the free exchange of opinions and ideas essential to academic freedom” (EVID: St-II-1.2). Accessibility comes with responsibility. In Spring 2021, as the majority of campus courses were being offered remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Faculty Council voted to approve an insertion of an academic honesty acknowledgement statement when students submit work in online courses (EVID: St-II-1.3). Policies include stated consequences for misuse and a detailed accounting of punitive options that may result from violations.

Students are uniformly made aware of the importance of academic honesty via the course syllabi, which follow the course syllabus template provided by the Office of the VPAA (EVID: St-II-1.4). Each syllabus is reviewed by the appropriate department chair for the inclusion of statements regarding accommodative services and academic honesty. Clinton Community College reinforces the importance of intellectual property by providing free, tutoring center workshops on avoiding plagiarism and supplemental instruction provided by Douglas Library staff on correct citation of sources. The College also provides free access to *Turnitin* software to students and faculty to evaluate effective citation choices and to improve ethical documentation in assignment submissions. While there are standard components in all course syllabi, there is ample freedom to individualize instruction, grading practices, and specific class/course policies. Academic departments are empowered with the responsibility to identify core objectives for courses and determine minimum assignment requirements, number and type of assessments, and grade achievement levels needed to satisfy completion of a course. It is important that faculty and departments are empowered to determine the best delivery format for course instruction, which became particularly evident during the pandemic.

When academic grievances and honesty violations are suspected, students and faculty follow an informal process with all involved parties and, for more serious concerns, a formal process which requires an incident

report. Both processes are detailed in the Student Handbook and College catalog, and on the website (EVID: St-II-3.5; St-II-3.6). The VPAA handles formal, academic grievances promptly, case by case, until a resolution is communicated to all parties involved. To ensure promptness standards are being met, the College should enhance its efforts to monitor and track grievances and to document the time it takes from filing the incident report to communicating a resolution.

## **Procedures to Address and Resolve Student, Faculty, and Staff Complaints and Grievances**

As stated in Clinton Community College's Affirmative Action statement in the [Student Handbook](#), "It is the policy of Clinton Community College to provide equal opportunity in education, employment, and participation in College activities without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, political affiliation, sexual orientation, veteran or marital status, or other basis prohibited by law, except as such conditions may constitute bona fide occupations or assignment qualifications" (EVID: St-II-3.7). The College holds firmly, as stated in the 2019 College Policies and Procedure Manual, that "Clinton Community College's primary goal in responding to complaints of prohibited discrimination under this Policy is prevention." The detailed policy is intended to "prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment in the College and put an end to any prohibited discrimination that is found to have occurred" (EVID: St-II-3.8).

While prevention is the goal, the College is prepared to impartially address complaints and grievances by adhering to documented procedures published in several resources that explain for both internal and external constituencies the process for reporting, investigating, resolving, and then documenting the findings and outcomes of each grievance or complaint filed by a member of the campus community. Publication of names and offices of compliance officers are located in multiple sources available to students including the Student Handbook, College website, and 2021-2022 College Catalog (EVID: St-II-3.9). This information is also communicated via print and digital signage located throughout campus. Transparency of the process is a good way to encourage ethical and honest practices on campus. It is a challenge to keep contact names and titles current due to changes in personnel, major campus construction projects necessitating office moves, and communicating effectively whether individuals are working on campus or remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. This requires ongoing review and updating.

### **Reporting and Documenting Grievances and Student Conduct Violations**

The Code of Student Conduct has timelines built into the grievance process which look to assure fundamental fairness and due process (EVID: St-II-3.10). In every case, specifically a Title IX case, the Code of Student Conduct is adhered to in order to protect the victim and afford due process to the accused. The Cleary Report is an annual reporting of conduct violations and campus incidents published accurately and completely in student consumer information links found on the College website (EVID: St-II-6.1). Decline in violation incidences in 2020-2021 is attributed to a combination of factors including the closure of the residence halls, decline in student population, and an increase in remote learning during the pandemic.

### **Avoiding Conflicts of Interest with Internal and External Constituents**

Identifying conflicts of interest where a person may derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity is essential to a campus of integrity. Clinton Community College's commitment is evidenced in policies of its Board of Trustees (BOT) which sets the ethical standard for the campus. The Board communicates its commitment to avoid conflicts of interest via the College website, including the Board of Trustees Conflict of Interest Policy (EVID: St-II-4.1) and the Board of Trustees bylaws (Article IX, Section 1) stating that trustees are subject to the General Municipal Law 801 of NYS which deals with conflict of interest. Also, Article X of the bylaws has a conflict-of-interest section noting that, "Members of the Board of Trustees and Officers of the Board shall sign a Conflict-of-Interest Statement annually at the Annual Organization meeting" (EVID: St-II-4.2).



The revised 2019 Policy on Relationships Between College Employees and Students demonstrates that the College reviews and revises its policies in an ongoing assessment of maintaining Clinton Community College as a campus of integrity. The policy states, "Implicit in the ideal of professionalism is the recognition by those in positions of authority that in their relationships with others within the College there is always an element of power. It is incumbent upon those with authority not to abuse, nor to seem to abuse, the power with which they are entrusted." Similar to other grievance procedures, the relationship policy detailed in 2019 Policy on Relationships Between College Employees and Students makes clear that violations will be addressed and are subject to "appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, verbal reprimand, written reprimand, transfers, suspension or dismissal." Investigation and resolution of the concern are directed to an appropriate individual or office as indicated in contracts between the College and respective bargaining units. Finally, the goal of this policy, as is true with all grievance and conflict of interest policies, is to "sustain and protect the learning process and the educational integrity of the College" (EVID: St-II-4.3).

An additional way to prevent concerns, to promote a positive, fair, and impartial learning and work environment for employees and students, and to reinforce the importance of policies and procedures is through the provision of compliance trainings for faculty and staff. When the Director of Human Resources position was left vacant in 2019, virtual compliance training was paused. Two internal modules were created at the request of the Dean of Student Affairs specific to diversity, but the contract for outside modules ceased. Compliance training courses are valued as an additional means of communicating the policies found in the 2019 Policies and Procedure Manual and assessing employees' understanding of them. It is anticipated that when the Director of Human Resources position is filled from the search launched in Spring 2021, compliance training will resume.

Clinton Community College has purchasing procedures designed not only to be fiscally responsible but also as a check on both internal and external conflicts of interest when it comes to agreements, contracts, appointments, and gift acceptance by the College or individual members of the College (EVID: St-II-4.4). Having these processes in place and publicizing bids for supplies and contracted work reduces favoritism and nepotism.

Great progress was made in 2020-2021 to articulate a clear process for prioritizing funding for requested positions and department/program support for existing and new initiatives. Clinton Community College revised its strategic planning manual in Spring 2021 after both the strategic plan and institutional priorities had been approved by Clinton Community College Board of Trustees. Inclusive and campus-wide participation in the development of these documents contributes to an expectation that allocations of funds will be fair and impartial and directly linked to the stated Institutional priorities. The approved Strategic Planning Procedure Manual requires periodic review to ensure that it is reflective of current organizational structures and functions (EVID: St-II-9.2).

### **Fair and Impartial Employment Practices**

"Clinton Community College's recruitment procedure promotes equal opportunity by selecting the best qualified individuals available to contribute towards achieving the College's mission." This guiding principle is stated in the Manual of Recruiting and Hiring Procedures, which serves as a resource to individuals with responsibility for recruiting, interviewing, and recommending employees for posted positions (EVID: St-II-5.1). The College also abides by its non-discrimination policy which provides for equal opportunity in employment practices (EVID: St-II-5.2).

Having in place clearly articulated processes for hiring, evaluating, promoting, disciplining, and separating from the College was essential in maintaining ethical practices during a period of vacancy in the Director of Human Resources position and the retirement of the Human Resources Specialist in December 2020. During the absence of staffing in the Office of Human Resources, the President of the College oversaw the functions of the office specific to fair and impartial employment practices. To carry out the search for a new Director of Human Resources, the President utilized detailed procedures made clear in the 2019 Policy and Procedure Manual and appointed individuals to the search committee who had demonstrated experience in the process. A successful

search was completed and an announcement of the hiring of an Interim Director of Human Resources was communicated to the campus in May 2021. Clinton Community College benefits from the creation of the Information Repository, a SharePoint document library available internally through Microsoft Office 365. The Information Repository was launched in 2020 to replace an unwieldy and under-maintained public folders system and to accommodate the research needs of the upcoming Middle States self-study. Specific to Human Resources, many files prior to 2020 were stored in a system not compatible with the campus management system resulting in concerns with access and sharing of files. Clinton Community College now has an Interim Director of Human Resources and a central location of information that is easily searched and accessed with a specific collection dedicated to human resources.

The College maintains its ethical standards and continues to follow stated policies even as the individuals in positions shift or positions are purposely left vacant. As detailed in the section on Chapter VI, the past three years have been a time of high transition of faculty and staff primarily due to retirement incentives, planned career moves, and end of grant funding necessitating an effective succession of responsibilities procedure. Currently, assessment of positives and negatives about working at Clinton Community College is documented in the 2019 Campus Climate Survey (EVID: St-II-9.3). The results give a positive overview of the campus climate but lacks a personal experience component. The development of a planned succession of responsibility interview in addition to individualized exit interviews are opportunities to maintain a campus of integrity by increasing understanding of an individual employee's workload and insight into areas of strength and improvement for the employee's work experience. Collecting and tracking these data, along with academic and student/employee concerns from the first report through resolution, will document the College's responsiveness to concerns in need of attention and review regarding Clinton's ethical policies.

### **Transparency and Commitment to Truthful Internal and External Communication**

Current, truthful information is communicated to prospective students and external constituents in student consumer information located on the College website (EVID: St-II-6.2). Announcements of positions and contracts are created collaboratively with appropriate department chairs, President's Cabinet, and the Office of Human Resources before being advertised to internal stakeholders and external constituents. These announcements include affirmative action and equal opportunity employer statements, and they are reviewed for truthfulness and consistency. The Dean of Enrollment Management then directs distribution through the Boire Benner Group, the College's media consultant firm. Exceptional progress has been made since the previous self-study on the creation of the College website to provide ease in accessing essential information mandated by federal, state, and MSCHE requirements. The Website Task Force updates information so that publications online and in other media have information that is consistent with documented evidence for both internal and external constituents. As communication technology has evolved, revised language has been added to the 2019 Policy and Procedure Manual explaining appropriate and approved use of social media and texting. Internal and external constituents need confidence in the authenticity of messages being generated and communicated as originating from Clinton Community College (EVID: St-II-6.3)

### **Informed Financial Obligation Enrollment Decisions**

Clinton Community College ethically and fully communicates financial information to students, so they are able to make informed decisions based on accurate reporting of costs, funding sources, and student obligation to "create their own paths to personal and professional growth". There are loans and funding available for students pursuing a degree or enrolling for trainings or professional development courses. Clinton Community College's website has numerous ways to access information regarding tuition and costs, and financial aid, making financial obligations transparent to students and families (EVID: St-II-7.1; St-II-7.2). The primary goal of the financial aid staff is to assist students in securing financial funding for their education. Clinton Community College is a member of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators and adheres to their statement of ethical principles (EVID: St-II-7.3). This specific area is one of the exceptional strengths of Clinton

Community College and is detailed further in the section on Standard IV. It is also an area reviewed and updated annually as funding dates, financial information, and funding sources change. Although the College continues to experience challenges and change, assessment by students in 2019 Student Opinion Survey reflects that they perceive value and quality for the education provided by the College.

## **Verification of Compliance**

Clinton Community College's compliance with accreditation-relevant federal regulations is demonstrated in the MSCHE Institutional Federal Compliance Report [\(EVID: St-II-8.1\)](#).






































## **Conclusion**

Clinton Community College demonstrates that it is a campus of ethics and integrity by grounding itself in its stated mission to, “provide educational opportunities in an inclusive and safe environment.” It is a supportive and responsive institution where academic and intellectual freedom, creative expression, and diverse perspectives are encouraged, valued, and protected by clear policies articulated to both internal constituents and external stakeholders. The College actively works to assess and stay current in best practices and policies on ethics and integrity. The College layers communication through multiple publication media regarding ethical expectations for conduct as well as policies and procedures to report perceived violations. Clinton Community College is transparent and compliant in collecting and reporting required data as mandated by federal, state, and MSCHE regulations to provide a truthful and accurate picture of the College.

## **Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation**

- Create an effective system for updating and publicizing changes in staffing, policies, and procedures.
- Review, revise, and reinstate compliance training administered by the Office of Human Resources.
- Formalize a succession planning procedure for all areas of the College to ensure comprehensive coverage.
- Consistently conduct employee exit interviews through the Office of Human Resources for enhancement of its work environment.
- Monitor and track academic and student conduct offenders with documentation of timeline for process standardization.
- Enhance diverse perspectives on campus through continued collaboration and by seeking funding to maintain and expand diversity-related initiatives.

## Standard II Supporting Documents

-  St-II-1.1 Faculty Association Contract 2014-2017 (Article VI)
-  St-II-1.2 Information Technology Acceptable Use Standard
-  St-II-1.3 Academic Honesty Statement in Moodle
-  St-II-1.4 Course Syllabus Template
-  St-II-2.1 Student Handbook Webpage
-  St-II-2.2 Diversity and Inclusion Plan
-  St-II-2.3 Faculty Council Bylaws (p.6)
-  St-II-2.4 Student Activities Board Webpage
-  St-II-2.5 College Vision Statement
-  St-II-2.6 Institutional Learning Outcomes
-  St-II-2.7 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (ODEI) - SUNY
-  St-II-2.8 Gender-Neutral Language Guidelines
-  St-II-3.1 Student Affairs Webpage
-  St-II-3.2 CCC Catalog 2021-2022 (Section 6)
-  St-II-3.3 Sexual Violence Response Policy Webpage
-  St-II-3.4 Acknowledgement Form Student Handbook
-  St-II-3.5 Academic Grievance Procedure
-  St-II-3.6 Policy on Academic Honesty
-  St-II-3.7 Statement of Affirmative Action
-  St-II-3.8 Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination Bias
-  St-II-3.9 CCC Catalog 2021-2022 (pp. 111-119)
-  St-II-3.10 Student Code of Conduct
-  St-II-4.1 BOT Conflict of Interest Policy
-  St-II-4.2 BOT By Laws (Article IX-X)
-  St-II-4.3 CCC Policies and Procedures (Section 1900)
-  St-II-4.4 CCC Policies and Procedures (Section 0502\_0514)
-  St-II-5.1 Recruiting and Hiring Procedures
-  St-II-5.2 CCC Statement of Non-Discrimination
-  St-II-6.1 Crime Statistics and Information
-  St-II-6.2 Student Consumer Information
-  St-II-6.3 CCC Policies and Procedures (Section 2001-2002)
-  St-II-7.1 Tuition & Aid Webpage
-  St-II-7.2 Student Consumer Information-Financial Aid
-  St-II-7.3 NASFAA Statement of Ethical Principles
-  St-II-9.1 CCC BOT Meeting Agenda Packet for May 25 2021
-  St-II-9.2 Strategic Planning Procedure Manual 2020-2025
-  St-II-9.3 CCC Campus Climate Survey Summary 2019



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



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

*“An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.”*  
(Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards for Accreditation, Standard III).

### Overview

At Clinton Community College, faculty are tasked with the development and implementation of academic programs, courses, and learning experiences that exhibit coherence, rigor, and excellence at any modality. Existing and new programs are carefully assessed and aligned with the strategic plan and delivered by appropriately qualified faculty.

### Strategic Plan

The [strategic plan](#) is assessed and updated on a five-year cycle, as described in the section on Standard I, by the Strategic Planning Committee. Specifically, this plan addresses how the College will support the mission, vision, and core values at the College. Subsequently, the strategic plan then serves as the basis for the academic affairs goals, which are annually assessed and updated by the Academic Affairs Department. These goals are then disseminated to academic departments. Each academic department then must develop specific department goals and link each of those goals to the strategic plan and the academic affairs goals. Finally, each continuing faculty member must develop individual goals for themselves, as outlined in Article XII 2A of the Faculty Association contract (EVID: St-III-2.1). These goals must be clearly aligned with the department goals, as well as the academic affairs goals, strategic goals, and institutional priorities. In turn, the individual, departmental, and academic affairs goals are used to help guide future revisions to the strategic plan (EVID: St-III-2.2). Through this recursive process, Clinton Community College ensures that the strategic plan is infused through the learning delivery at every level. The individual and department goals also serve to inform the Academic Affairs Department and Strategic Planning Committee as they review the needs and challenges that face the College.

### Academics

#### Degrees, Programs, and Certificates

Clinton Community College offers both certificate and associate degree programs, including four Associate of Arts (A.A.) degrees, six Associate of Sciences (A.S.) degrees, 13 Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees, one Associate of Occupational Studies (A.O.S.) degree, and eight certificates (Table 6). Five degree programs and one certificate can be completed 100% online. An additional three degree and two certificate programs can be completed 50%-75% online (EVID: St-III-1.1). These degrees are assessed on a five year cycle (EVID: St-III-1.2), with annual progress updates required in years two through five. The academic program assessment cycle schematic depicts this assessment process and its tie into strategic planning and budgeting (EVID: St-III-8.1). The program review process is discussed in greater detail in the section on Standard V.

Additionally, more than 50 courses are available via online learning through Clinton Online (EVID: St-III-1.3). The College also offers flex courses, which are courses that students can take in-person, online, or in a combination of the two. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the switch to remote learning, the College has increased its online and flex offerings to better meet individual student needs.

The College is continually refining academic offerings to best meet the varied needs of its students. As a result, several new degree programs have been added, including Environmental Science A.S. degree in 2015 (EVID: St-III-1.4), Applied Psychology A.S. degree in 2017 (EVID: St-III-1.5), and an English A.A. degree in 2018 (EVID: St-III-

1.6). These transfer degrees were added in consultation with transfer institutions to give students better defined paths to their four-year degrees. Additionally, an entirely online Health Services Management A.A.S. degree was approved in 2017 (EVID: St-III-1.7). An A.O.S. degree in Industrial/Commercial Electrician was added in Fall 2019 (EVID: St-III-1.8). Most recently, a Business Management Certificate was approved in 2021 (EVID: St-III-1.9). In 2018, the Early Childhood Care and Development Certificate was deactivated due to ongoing low-enrollment and because the certificate exceeded employment requirements in the field (EVID: St-III-1.10).

In keeping with SUNY Seamless Transfer, Clinton Community College also developed tracks within certain degrees to aid with seamless transfer. These include a biology track within the Liberal Arts: Math and Science A.A. degree (EVID: St-III-1.11) and an art studio track within the Liberal Arts: Humanities and Social Science A.A. degree (EVID: St-III-1.12).

**Table 6: Degrees, Programs, and Certificates Currently Offered at Clinton Community College**

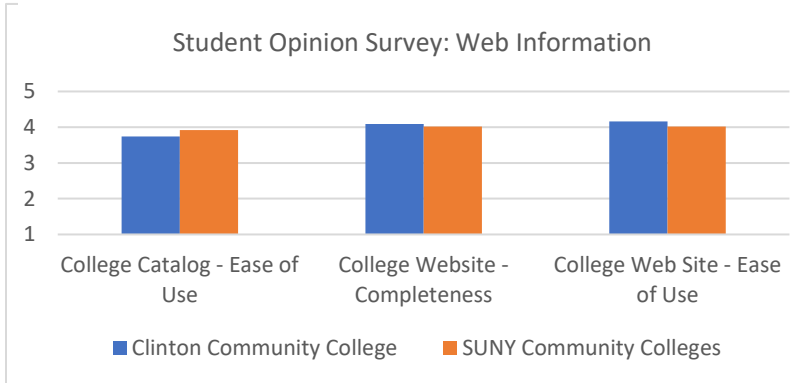
Associate of Arts (A.A.)		Associate of Sciences (A.S.)		
Criminal Justice	English	Applied Psychology	Business Administration	Business Administration: Sport Management
Individual Studies	Liberal Arts: Humanities & Social Science	Environmental Science	Individual Studies	Liberal Arts: Math & Science
Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.)				
Accounting	Business Administration	Computer and Electronics Technology	Computer Information Systems	Criminal Justice
Environmental Technology	Health Services Management	Individual Studies	Mechanical Technology	Nursing
Renewable Energy Technologies	Wind Energy & Turbine Technology			
Associate of Occupational Studies (A.O.S.)	Certificates			
	Alcohol & Substance Abuse Counseling	Business Management	Computer Support	Health Studies
Industrial/Commercial Electrician	Industrial/Commercial Electrician	Payroll	Renewable Energy Technologies	Wind Turbine Service Technician

Current and potential students can access and view degree program and certificate requirements as well as full course descriptions in the College catalog (EVID: St-III-3.1) or on the Clinton Community College website (EVID: St-III-3.2). To help students plan their academic studies, Clinton Community College provides degree requirement worksheets for each certificate and degree program (EVID: St-III-3.3).

SUNY’s Office of Institutional Research conducts student opinion surveys on a three-year cycle. Students at Clinton Community College gave the accessibility of the College website and catalog a high rating (Figure 1).



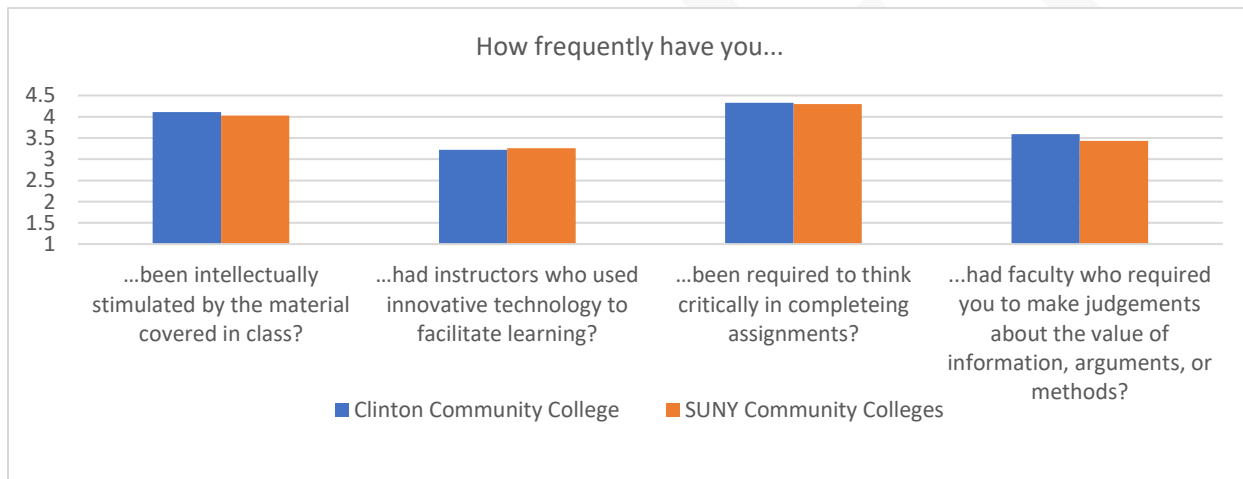
**Figure 1: Student Opinion Survey: Web Information**



Source: Student Opinion Survey, 2019. Scale 1-5.

The programs and certificates at Clinton Community College are marked by quality education and in-depth student engagement. Students indicated a high level of academic engagement at Clinton Community College, on par with or exceeding responses at other SUNY Community Colleges (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Level of Academic Engagement**



Source: Student Opinion Survey, 2019. Scale of 1-5.

## Academic Program and Course Development Process

At Clinton Community College, curriculum development and revision are faculty-driven processes. New courses and substantive course revision approvals originate in the sponsoring academic department and are submitted to the Curriculum Committee, a standing academic committee of Faculty Council, for review and approval. If approved, the course proposal is brought before the full Faculty Council for approval. Finally, the proposal is sent to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for final approval. If approved, the course is then added to the College catalog (EVID: St-III-1.13).

Program and certificate development and revision begins with a sponsoring department developing the curriculum and forwarding the written proposal to the Curriculum Committee. This proposal will outline the full curriculum and requirements of the program or certificate. If approved, the proposal is sent on to the full Faculty Council for approval, followed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (EVID: St-III-1.14). Proposals for new and substantially revised programs require approval by the College President and Board of Trustees and submission to SUNY and NYSED for notification and approval (EVID: St-III-1.15).

## Honors Program

The Honors Program at Clinton Community College is housed in Academic Affairs Department, and the Honors Program Coordinator reports to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (EVID: St-III-4.1). The Honors Program Advisory Board also sets policies, procedures, and educational opportunities to meet the program's vision. The Honors Program at Clinton Community College is guided by the National Collegiate Honors Council's (NCHC) Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program. The Honors Program admission, retention, and completion requirements are found on the College website (EVID: St-III-4.2). Honors course and program completion are noted on student transcripts.

The Honors Program was established in the fall of 2014 to challenge and motivate academically talented students, such as those participating in the Presidential Scholarship Program, which granted full-tuition scholarships to high achieving high school students in the North Country. The Honors Program's vision is to encourage students to take intellectual risks through stimulating coursework and personal growth opportunities, to work collaboratively with each other and with faculty, and to leave the program with an enriched collegiate experience.

The program began by offering general education coursework that had immersive field trips or were interdisciplinary (e.g., Art Appreciation, History of the Champlain Valley 1609-1860, Honors Literature and the Individual) and specialized one-credit coursework (e.g., Robotics, Exoplanets). However, despite the advisory board's efforts to be open and available to the College's diverse populations, there were very low participation rates for A.A.S. students. In Spring 2017, the program added the option of learning contracts to allow more flexibility, and this led to an increase in A.A.S. student participation. A learning contract is an in-course option of earning honors credit. This process is a student-driven and faculty supported way to enhance a non-honors course and, when the learning contract is completed, the student will earn honors class credit. Students can use this option to engage in educational experiences that will benefit them as they transfer to a four-year school (such as a research project), or they can choose to delve deeper in an area related to their major or to explore an interest (such as a service-learning project).

The discontinuation of the Presidential Scholarship and the College's declining enrollment have had a negative impact on the Honors Program. As a result, the program is now only able to offer one fall honors course annually but has met the need through expanding learning contracts and encouraging scholars to collaborate. Due to the pandemic, the Honors Program annual campus events and activities were suspended, as were community-based learning contracts. These challenges have impacted the options available to these students and the community-based nature of the program.

Due to low enrollment and few offerings, the program does not meet all NCHC requirements, including the recommendation that 20-25% of a participating student's coursework consists of honors course credits (EVID: St-III-4.3). Additionally, pandemic restrictions have prevented honors students from utilizing campus spaces and from taking part in participatory learning and travel.

## Community and Workforce Development

In addition to the academic degree and certificate programs at Clinton Community College, students are offered non-credit courses and certifications designed towards supporting careers and professional development. Specific programs include courses in Basic and Advanced Emergency Medical Technician, Driver Education, and Welding (EVID: St-III-7.1). Certificate-based learning opportunities, such as Healthcare, Business Administration, Information Technology, and Business Management, are provided through a partnership with CareerStep, an online training provider that partners with higher education institutions (EVID: St-III-7.2). CareerStep provides 'one sheets' to students that outline the programs and the opportunities each provides. Learning objectives are also provided to the College and reviewed by the Community & Workforce Development Specialist (EVID: St-III-7.3).

## General Education

Clinton Community College’s mission “to provide educational opportunities in an inclusive and safe environment that empower individuals to create their own paths to personal and professional growth” is supported by its General Education Program, an extension of the State University of New York’s General Education Requirement (SUNY-GER), adopted by the SUNY Board of Trustees in 1998. In 2010, the SUNY Board of Trustees revised the general education requirements to the current iteration which stipulates that students must take courses in at least seven of the ten listed general education categories and demonstrate competency in Information Management and Critical Thinking (EVID: St-III-5.1).

In 2012, former SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher and the Board of Trustees initiated the SUNY Seamless Transfer Requirement to ensure students enrolled at any one of the 64 SUNY campuses could transfer all of their earned credits, including General Education credits, to another SUNY campus (EVID: St-III-5.2).

Clinton Community College’s General Education Program is reviewed and monitored by the General Education Committee, which has representation from multiple academic departments. Revisions to the program are presented for review and approval to the Faculty Council, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President. The administrative process to approve courses that meet general education outcomes begins in the academic departments and adheres to the Guidelines for Approval of State University General Education Requirement Courses (EVID: St-III-5.3). A faculty member presents a written proposal for departmental review, and if approved, the proposal is reviewed by the General Education Committee, the Faculty Council, the VPAA, and the President. After all internal approvals are obtained, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator submits the request to SUNY via the Course Submission and Evaluation System (CourSES) for final review and approval (EVID: St-III-5.4).

**Table 7: Number of Approved General Education Courses by Category**

SUNY General Education Subject Areas	Number of Courses Approved at Clinton Community College
Basic Communication (required)	4
Mathematics (required)	11
American History	3
Other World Civilizations	4
Foreign Language	11
Social Sciences	12
Humanities	11
The Arts	22
Natural Sciences	20
Western Civilization	3

SUNY General Education Competencies	Number of Courses Approved at Clinton Community College
Critical Thinking (required)	2
Information Management (required)	3

Source: SUNY General Education Dashboard

Clinton Community College demonstrates its commitment to providing students with the opportunity to acquire and demonstrate oral and written communication through its Institutional Learning Outcomes, specifically ILO 1: Written Communication and ILO 2: Oral Communication. Included in those ILOs is an assessment of students’ ability to “demonstrate organized, developed, and coherent writing skills that adapt to the needs of the discipline and to the rhetorical situation” and to show “effective spoken communication by presenting ideas clearly and concisely with regard to subject, audience, and purpose” (EVID: St-III-5.5). In 2019, Clinton Community College began reassessing its program requirements, as while all transfer degree programs require ENG 101 College Composition, a Basic Communication GER course, this course did not include an oral

component. Therefore, it was possible for some students to graduate without having completed the oral communication portion of the requirement. As a result, the General Education Committee developed a recommendation that all transfer degree programs include an approved Oral Communication course in their degree requirements, thus fulfilling the remaining Basic Communication learning outcomes.

Clinton Community College offers many general education math and science courses to provide options for students that align with their skill levels and academic interests. Students can satisfy the SUNY general education requirements for Mathematics and Natural Science by taking one approved course in each of those subject areas. These requirements align with Clinton Community College’s ILO 3: Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning, which requires students to “demonstrate the ability to apply logical thinking to solve quantitative problems and understand natural phenomena”.

Critical thinking and reasoning are infused throughout the curriculum at Clinton Community College, as students are expected to apply rationales and metacognition in each of their courses. Critical Thinking is also a SUNY General Education Requirement. In accordance with the Clinton Community College General Education Assessment Plan-Sixth Cycle, the learning outcomes of this infused competency were assessed in the 2019-2020 academic year. Historically, Critical thinking was assessed in scientific courses. More recently, Critical Thinking was added as an assessed outcome in ENG 102 Literature and Composition. Assessment rubrics are administered to faculty of those courses per the cycle.

**Table 8: Critical Thinking Assessment Results, 2019-2020**

GER Competency – Critical Thinking	Students Assessed	% Exceeding Standards	% Meeting Standards	% Approaching Standards	% Not Meeting Standards
Students will identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments as they occur in their own or others' work.	N=96	58.3	21.9	10.4	9.4
Students will develop well-reasoned arguments.					

Source: General Education Campus Report 2019-2020

Several courses at the College are dedicated to developing and improving students’ basic technological competencies. Among them are CSC 102 Introduction to Microcomputer Applications and CSC 121 Fundamental Concepts of Computing. These courses are common requirements or electives for various degrees. Clinton Community College also emphasizes technological competency through ILO 5: Technological Competence, which states “[s]tudents will use appropriate technologies to effectively research, communicate, analyze, and apply information”.

Technological competency is also part of the SUNY Competency for Information Management, which requires “Students will perform the basic operations of personal computer use.” This competency was measured in LIB 101 Library Research Skills AND CSC 102 Introduction to Microcomputer Applications during the Fall 2017/Spring 2018 semesters.

**Table 9: Technological Competency Assessment Results, 2017-2018**

GER – Information Management	Students Assessed	% Exceeding Standards	% Meeting Standards	% Approaching Standards	% Not Meeting Standards
Perform basic operations of personal computer use.	N=158	56.7	43.3	0	0

Source: General Education Campus Report 2017-2018

Information Literacy is not limited to a single course, however, as it is emphasized across all courses and programs at Clinton Community College. Students are expected to be critical consumers of information as they develop their own arguments and research. Indeed, ILO 6 is Information Literacy, which reads “Students will obtain, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of sources.” This focus on information literacy also

aligns with the Information Management Competency devised by SUNY. While infused across the curriculum, this competency is assessed in specific classes, LIB 101 Library Research Skills, SCI 110 Foundational Skills in Science, and CSC 102 Introduction to Microcomputer Applications. This competency was assessed during the Fall 2017/Spring 2018 semesters.

**Table 10: Information Management Assessment Results, 2017-2018**

GER – Information Management	Students Assessed	% Exceeding Standards	% Meeting Standards	% Approaching Standards	% Not Meeting Standards
Students will understand and use basic research techniques	N=158	51.6	33.9	14.5	0
Students will locate, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of sources		58.1	35.5	6.5	0

Source: General Education Campus Report 2017-2018

Clinton Community College prides itself on having a foundation of values, ethics, and diversity in not only its course and program offerings, but campus wide. This mission is supported by ILO 7: Global Awareness and Cultural Sensitivity, which states “[s]tudents will develop an awareness of and respect for the diverse perspectives among individuals and cultures within a global society.” This outcome does not align with a specific General Education requirement. Instead, this effort is infused across the curriculum, as well as in campus activities as described further in the section on Standard IV. Diversity of thought and human expression are complemented in academic disciplines by campus events linking arts/creative expression with academic disciplines, as evidenced in the following examples. The Criminal Justice Club sponsored a performance of “Mariposa and the Saint” speaking to the ethical questions and practices of solitary confinement in prison facilities. In addition, the Children’s Literature course featured a panel discussion on culture and gender identity, and diversity and inclusion in children’s literature. In Spring 2021, the Gender and Women’s Studies instructor invited a panel of guest speakers, including three former presidents of Professional Women Controllers who Zoomed in from all over the country, to discuss the challenges of women in air traffic control and male-dominated professions.

### College Advancement Program (CAP)

The College Advancement Program (CAP) is a concurrent enrollment program that affords high school students the opportunity to take college credit-bearing courses, typically taught by college-approved high school teachers (EVID: St-III-1.16). Students gain exposure to the academic challenges of college while in their supportive high school environment, earning college credit upon successful completion of the course. Each site has a designated Site Coordinator, an employee of the secondary school who is responsible for student academic eligibility, course registration, and communication regarding student/parent concerns. The site coordinator collaborates with the CAP Coordinator, an individual at Clinton Community College who oversees all aspects of the College Advancement Program. The CAP Coordinator serves as a bridge between the College and high school site coordinators, supervises the CAP liaisons, and is the main point of contact for information about the program. Currently, the Vice President for Academic Affairs is also serving as the CAP Coordinator.

Although CAP instructors are employed and supervised by the secondary school, they collaborate with a CAP liaison, who is a designated full-time Clinton Community College teaching faculty member. To ensure quality of instruction and consistency between on-campus and off-campus courses, CAP liaisons schedule classroom visits and provide written feedback for the CAP instructor. The written feedback is shared with the CAP instructor, the appropriate department chair, and the CAP Coordinator. Classroom visitation notes are not submitted to high school administrators, nor do they have an impact on the instructor’s employment status at the high school (EVID: St-III-8.2).

In addition to on-site visitations, outcomes assessment procedures and results are subject to evaluation by the department in which the CAP course is housed. This is intended to ensure that assessment practices and standards of CAP instructors align with those of on-campus instructors (EVID: St-III-8.3).

## **Academic Support**

### **Academic Advisement**

Each student is assigned an advisor who teaches within their academic program or is very familiar with the program requirements and course expectations. These advisors are a mix of teaching and non-teaching professionals at the College. Academic advisors help students identify educational goals, connect students with support services, explain course and degree requirements, and assist in course selection. Using tools available in the Faculty Portal, advisors can audit students' degree requirements to determine which program requirements have been satisfied and which coursework is remaining. Academic advisement is discussed in more detail in the section on Standard IV.

### **Tutoring Center**

While much of the learning at Clinton Community College occurs in the classroom, students continue to find support and reinforcement of learning through the Tutoring Center (EVID: St-III-4.4). Tutors are professional educators with appropriate disciplinary degrees and some also teach classes at the College. Tutors provide academic support and supplement the education provided in the classroom.

Through this team of professionals, Clinton Community College is able to support students and better assure the continuity and coherence of the educational programs. The academic support provided through the Tutoring Center is discussed in more detail in the section on Standard IV.

## **Teaching Faculty**

### **Teaching Faculty Qualifications**

The Vice President for Academic Affairs oversees 29 full-time and approximately 31 part-time instructional faculty members across 11 departments, as of Spring 2021. Each academic department is responsible for establishing minimum qualifications for hiring full-time and part-time teaching faculty in their disciplines. Typically, a full-time faculty member holds, at minimum, a master's degree in the field in which the faculty member teaches or in a related field. Part-time teaching faculty, at minimum, hold a bachelor's degree in the field of study in which the faculty member teaches or in a related field. CAP instructors must meet the minimum qualifications used for part-time faculty in a particular field.

Vacancy announcements and the hiring process for tenure track full-time teaching faculty members is outlined in the Recruitment and Hiring Procedure Manual (EVID: St-III-2.3) and in the 2019 Policies and Procedure Manual (p. 43) (EVID: St-III-2.4).

Part-time and CAP instructors who apply to teach have their education and experience reviewed by the department chair or the appropriate CAP Liaison. If the instructor is deemed qualified to teach a particular course, the course will be added to the Adjunct/CAP Course Approval Form (EVID: St-III-2.5), signed and dated by the department chair. The course approval form is kept in the faculty member's personnel file.

Upon hire at Clinton Community College, full-time teaching faculty are assigned an academic rank based on a combination of experience and educational background. There are four academic ranks to which a full-time faculty member may be assigned: instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. The criteria for the academic ranks are described in the Fall 2019 Policies and Procedure Manual (EVID: St-III-2.6). Part-time faculty are not assigned rank. Instead, they are assigned a level from I to IV. Part-time faculty can be promoted in level solely based on time of service and performance (EVID: St-III-2.7).



Full-time teaching faculty are evaluated using a variety of methods that include student, self, peer, and supervisor evaluations. The requirements to be evaluated are outlined in the Faculty Association contract, Article XII (EVID: St-III-2.8). Following a schedule outlined in the Faculty Association contract, Article XII.B, students are asked to evaluate a faculty member's teaching at the end of semesters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 14, 18, 22, etc. (EVID: St-III-2.9) The same schedule and instrument are used for part-time faculty. In addition to these student ratings, full-time teaching faculty are required to submit an annual self-evaluation portfolio during the first five years of employment following the criteria and timeline provided in the Faculty Association contract, Article XII.C and Article XII.D. The portfolio must contain a self-evaluation statement along with supporting evidence addressing three criteria: effectiveness as an instructor, contributions to the College, and continued professional growth. A peer review committee appointed by the President, in consultation with the Vice President for Academic Affairs, evaluates the portfolio and holds a peer conference with the faculty member to discuss the faculty member's strengths and weaknesses. These strengths and weaknesses are written in a document that is shared with the Vice President for Academic Affairs. While the required materials for the portfolio are clearly outlined, there is not a standardized assessment rubric to guide peer evaluations.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs reviews the peer review document and the faculty member's portfolio and then makes a recommendation to the President to reappoint or not reappoint the faculty member. The President then reviews the peer review document and portfolio and makes the final recommendation to the Board of Trustees. Once the faculty member has been reappointed for five years, the faculty member obtains tenure.

After achieving tenure, teaching faculty members are not required to submit a portfolio; however, tenured faculty members are required to submit annual professional goals and a self-evaluation statement summarizing effectiveness as an instructor, contributions to the College, and continued professional growth (EVID: St-III-2.10). Faculty are permitted to apply for promotion in academic rank. The process for promotion involves preparing and submitting a portfolio similar to a reappointment portfolio. The process and timeline are found in the Faculty Association contract, Article XII.D.3 (EVID: St-III-2.11). Financial constraints due to falling enrollment have curtailed promotion opportunities for faculty. As a result, no promotions have been approved by the administration since Fall 2015.

Part-time faculty are evaluated using a combination of student ratings, as mentioned above, and classroom observations. Classroom observations are conducted by the department chair or designee in the first two semesters and then the 8<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> semesters. The department chairs collaborated to create a common Classroom Observation Report (EVID: St-III-2.12) that is completed following the classroom observation. This process is outlined in the Part-Time Faculty Handbook (EVID: St-III-2.13).

### **Faculty Opportunities and Resources**

All full-time faculty at Clinton Community College are expected to pursue professional development activities, while part-time faculty are encouraged to do so. The College hosts professional development opportunities at a variety of levels.

The Faculty Council features a Professional Development Committee charged with dispersing funds to faculty members that will support opportunities for professional growth (EVID: St-III-2.14). The committee is made up of faculty members and funded through the College. Proposals submitted to the committee are reviewed and weighed with consideration of the benefit to the faculty member, the benefit to the College, and the budgetary limitations of the committee. The committee's budget has been absorbed back into the larger College budget due to shrinking resources primarily attributable to declining enrollment. As a result, the committee has focused more on internal trainings and peer workshops in order to continue its mission. Recent workshops have included topics such as "LGBTQ Toolkit for Faculty," "Outlook Calendar and One Drive," and "Sharing Remote Learning Best Practices." Despite fiscal constraints, excellent sessions continue with a focus on shared professional development.

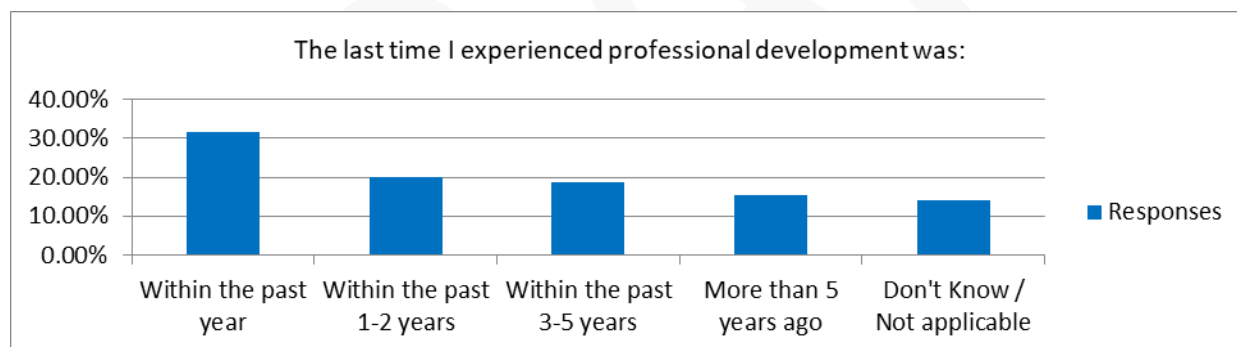
The Westfall Professional Development Scholarship, funded through the College Foundation, was developed to help faculty and staff attend conferences, obtain certification, conduct a research project, develop a project, or carry out another endeavor that enhances their contribution to the College community and mission (EVID: St-III-2.15). Full-time faculty are eligible to receive up to \$1,000 per academic year, while part-time faculty are eligible to receive up to \$500.

In 2017, Clinton Community College was awarded a \$65,000 SUNY Math Pathways grant, which provided professional development opportunities for math faculty. All full-time math faculty, the STEM Success and Retention Coordinator, and two part-time math faculty attended multi-day trainings to prepare to teach the nationally recognized Quantway curriculum. Several other Quantway related workshops have been attended using the funds provided by the grant.

In spring of 2019, the College secured \$20,000 through SUNY’s Strong Start to Finish Grant. The grant money was used to work on campus projects related to the six core principles defined by the grant program. In addition to being awarded the grant money, SUNY has provided several free, or low-cost, professional development opportunities to campuses awarded the grant. Math and English faculty, along with student support staff, have been able to attend Zoom webinars and workshops held in Albany. Some of the workshops and webinars attended include those pertaining to multiple measures in math and English placements, remote teaching and learning best practices, holistic student supports, and change in leadership.

In Fall 2019, the College conducted an internal campus climate survey. One of the aspects examined was professional development. Out of 85 faculty and staff respondents, the highest percentage indicated they experienced professional development within the last year, while the second highest percentage indicated they had received professional development in the past one to two years (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Faculty Participation in Professional Development Activities**



Campus Climate Survey, 2019. Percentage of total responses to each category.

In the same survey, respondents indicated there are insufficient opportunities for professional development at the College. In comments, respondents indicated the greatest limitation to professional development they perceived was budgetary cuts that decreased funding opportunities.

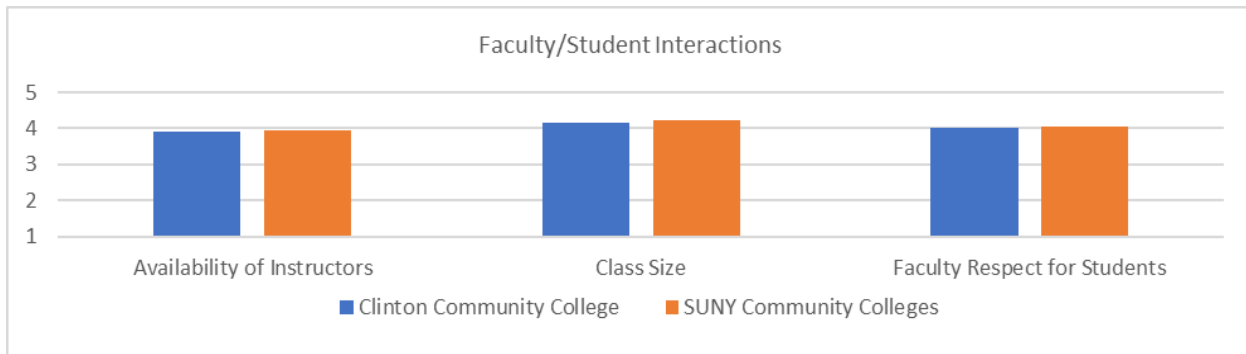
**Faculty Availability**

Class size at Clinton Community College is purposely kept small, as one of the institutional strengths is the access students have to their faculty. As of Fall 2019, the ratio of students to faculty was 16 to 1 (EVID: St-III-2.17), a favorable ratio that enables students to each receive personal attention from their instructor.

Faculty also maintain five office hours per week, spread over a minimum of four days, as outlined in the Faculty Association contract (EVID: St-III-2.18). These hours are dedicated times at which students can seek out their instructors and advisors for academic support and additional instruction.

Students have reported positively on the availability, respect, and ratio of their instructors, at rates comparable to other SUNY community colleges (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Student Perception of Faculty-Student Interactions**



Source: Student Opinion Survey, 2019. Scale 1-5

## Conclusion

Clinton Community College provides students with learning experiences demonstrating academic rigor at all levels and delivery methods. The College's mission and goals inform its learning delivery, as does regular assessment of its programs. Program and certificate offerings are responsive to student needs and developed and refined based upon careful examination. Courses at the College are taught by dedicated, qualified professionals who are regularly reviewed. There are internal professional development opportunities for faculty, though finances have restricted external opportunities. Low enrollment and employee attrition have necessitated reducing course offerings to students.

## Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation

- Reinstatement of funding to the Professional Development Committee to encourage and support faculty and staff in professional development opportunities.
- Develop a Values, Ethics, and Diverse Perspectives campus-level general education requirement for all A.A. and A.S. degrees.
- Offer and enhance campus classes, events, and community-based learning contracts for Honors Program participants after pandemic restrictions are lifted.
- Formalize the College Advancement Program (CAP) Coordinator position and fill it with a dedicated hire.
- Prioritize promotions of faculty when finances allow.
- Develop a standardized peer evaluation form to be used for the renewal and tenure process for faculty.

## Standard III Supporting Documents

- 🔗 St-III-1.1 Online Learning Programs at Clinton Community College
- 🔗 St-III-1.2 Five-Year Assessment Cycle for Academic Program Reviews
- 🔗 St-III-1.3 Online, Flex, and Hybrid Courses -SP21 and SU21
- 🔗 St-III-1.4 Environmental Science A.S Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-1.5 Applied Psychology A.S. Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-1.6 English A.A. Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-1.7 Health Services Management A.A.S. Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-1.8 Industrial Commercial Electrician A.O.S. Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-1.9 Business Management Certificate Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-1.10 Proposal to Deactivate Early Childhood Care Certificate
- 🔗 St-III-1.11 SUNY Seamless Transfer-Biology
- 🔗 St-III-1.12 SUNY Seamless Transfer-Art Studio
- 🔗 St-III-1.13 Curriculum Development & Revision Handbook (Chap1)
- 🔗 St-III-1.14 Curriculum Development & Revision Handbook (Chap2)
- 🔗 St-III-1.15 Curriculum Development & Revision Handbook (Chap3)
- 🔗 St-III-1.16 College Advancement Program Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-2.1 Faculty Association Contract XII (pp.44-45)
- 🔗 St-III-2.2 CCC Strategic Planning Process
- 🔗 St-III-2.3 Recruitment Hiring Procedure
- 🔗 St-III-2.4 CCC Policies and Procedures (pp.43-46)
- 🔗 St-III-2.5 Adjunct\_CAP Course Approval Form
- 🔗 St-III-2.6 CCC Policies and Procedures (pp.22-23)
- 🔗 St-III-2.7 PLACEHOLDER Part-time Faculty Handbook (pp.10-11)
- 🔗 St-III-2.8 Faculty Association Contract 2014-2017 (Article XII)
- 🔗 St-III-2.9 Student Course Opinion Survey
- 🔗 St-III-2.10 Faculty Association Contract 2014-2017 (Article XII.D.2)
- 🔗 St-III-2.11 Faculty Association Contract 2014-2017 (Article XII.D.3)
- 🔗 St-III-2.12 Classroom Observation Report
- 🔗 St-III-2.13 PLACEHOLDER Part-time Faculty Handbook (p.19)
- 🔗 St-III-2.14 CCC Faculty Council Bylaws (pp.6-7)
- 🔗 St-III-2.15 Professional Development Funding Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-2.16 Strong Start To Finish Core Principles
- 🔗 St-III-2.17 College Navigator - Clinton Community College
- 🔗 St-III-2.18 Faculty Association Contract 2014-2017 (Article VII.B.11)
- 🔗 St-III-3.1 College Catalog 2020-21 (Section-4)
- 🔗 St-III-3.2 Degrees & Certificates Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-3.3 Degree Requirements Worksheets Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-4.1 Honors Program Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-4.2 Honors Program Admissions Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-4.3 NCHC Basic Characteristics Fully Developed Honors Program
- 🔗 St-III-4.4 Tutoring Center Webpage
- 🔗 St-III-5.1 SUNY General Education Requirements
- 🔗 St-III-5.2 SUNY Seamless Transfer Policies
- 🔗 St-III-5.3 SUNY GenEd Course Approval Guidelines\_2017
- 🔗 St-III-5.4 Gen Ed Course Addition Request
- 🔗 St-III-5.5 Institutional Learning Outcomes
- 🔗 St-III-7.1 Third Party Community Workforce Development Offerings
- 🔗 St-III-7.2 CareerStep \_ Clinton Community College
- 🔗 St-III-7.3 Course Description & Objectives – CareerStep
- 🔗 St-III-8.1 Academic Assessment Cycle
- 🔗 St-III-8.2 CAP Classroom Visitation Report
- 🔗 St-III-8.3 CAP Instructor and Administrator Handbook (pp.9 &17)

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





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

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

### **Overview**

In alignment with its mission, Clinton Community College strives to be a great equalizer for students of all walks of life and abilities, and a provider of different learning opportunities to empower all learners on their educational journeys leading to a career, professional development, or further studies. The College attracts, admits, enrolls, and retains students by making matriculated, non-matriculated, and non-credit college entry and attendance a personable, supportive, and purposeful process.

From inquiry, through enrollment, to graduation, the College considers its brand to be a collective experience provided to students and not simply a marketing presence or strategy. In that context, the brand strategy created in 2016 is based on the College's mission and vision and is reflected in the College's brand positioning statement, which says that:

"To individuals in the North Country and beyond, who are interested in quality, transferable education, professional credentials, personal enrichment, retraining, advancing their career, or training their workforce, SUNY Clinton Community College is the school of choice because we are deliberate in our efforts to connect learning with real life in order to empower individuals to develop habits of mind in intellectual and professional capacity so they can realize their true potential through our affordable education and services easily accessible to all, and grounded in the value of diversity, community care, and service for the benefit of our shared future, so that no matter who you are, where you're from, or where you're going, you are valued and supported as you pursue your goals to make your life better in practical and visionary ways" (EVID: St-IV-1.1).

### **Policies and Processes for Student Success**

The College provides comprehensive and transparent information regarding policies and processes for student admissions, retention, and support as well as appeal policies with instructions about what students can and should do after an academic dismissal. All policies are included in the [College catalog](#) and on the website, specifically on the student consumer information webpage (EVID: St-IV-1.2). Internal processes are documented in the College's Information Repository and departmental SharePoint sites.

Rooted in the College's core values of respect and access, business process models of recruitment and other admissions operations were created to identify barriers to students and evaluate efficiency of operations. The models were then updated to clarify and simplify processes from recruitment to admissions and to set specific expectations for student service and responsiveness (EVID: St-IV-1.3). These processes are reviewed annually as part of the Enrollment Management Report (EVID: St-IV-1.4), which feeds the [Institutional Effectiveness Plan](#). In order to improve processes that facilitate student success on their educational journey, the Enrollment Management Committee was established in 2016 and was converted to a subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee in 2019. The committee focuses on recruitment and retention initiatives that create a simpler and more personalized approach to fulfilling student needs. Examples of such strategies include revamping the first-term advising process for new students; creating a comprehensive enrollment numbers report per student type to keep track of registration trends and to identify which student groups may need



additional outreach (EVID: St-IV-1.5); and initiating the integration of services for non-credit and credit students in alignment with the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

## **Student Recruitment and Retention**

### **Recruitment and Admissions**

Clinton Community College, with its open access mission, ensures that anyone with a high school diploma or GED has an opportunity to pursue higher education. Recruitment and marketing of the College's offerings is preceded by an assessment of the local workforce needs, number of high school graduates, and the College's enrollment trends for individual student groups (EVID: St-IV-1.4). During the recruitment process, the Admissions Office staff informs prospective students about how the College's offerings can fit different educational and career pathways. By using the College website (EVID: St-IV-1.6) or the annually renewed Academic Program Guide (EVID: St-IV-1.7), which summarizes all available credit and non-credit programs, potential and existing students have an opportunity to determine if the College is a good fit for them and learn which courses they will have to complete to achieve their desired educational outcomes. Marketing outreach to individual prospective students is exclusively based on "opt-in" inquiry contacts. The College does not purchase any leads information, phone numbers or emails, and recruitment communications are in compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) rules and regulations (EVID: St-IV-3.1)

Admission processes and requirements are listed in the College catalog (EVID: St-IV-1.8) and are also provided as an "Application Checklist" linked from multiple webpages on the College website (EVID: St-IV-1.9). The checklist covers areas directly related to the application process as well as steps students should be aware of early in their decision-making process. These include state-mandated documentation, such as immunization requirements, EVID: <https://www.clinton.edu/campus-resources/health-services/acceptable-proof.aspx>; housing options in the area; registration and placement processes; and financial aid information as explained in detail below.

### **Costs and Financial Aid**

The College provides comprehensive information on tuition and fees (EVID: St-IV-1.10) as approved by the Board of Trustees. This information is updated annually on the College website and in the College catalog (EVID: St-IV-1.11). Students are charged tuition per semester based on in-state or out-of-state/international residence and full-time or part-time status. Students who pay out of pocket have the option of setting up a payment plan each semester (EVID: St-IV-1.12). Important financial deadlines identifying refund dates and payment plan due dates are updated each semester and posted on the tuition and cost webpage (EVID: St-IV-1.13). Customized financial information is included in the students' billing and financial aid pages in their Student Portal.

The financial aid webpage offers students the SUNY Net Price Calculator tool (EVID: St-IV-1.14) so they can determine the exact cost of attending college. Also available is SUNY Smart Track (EVID: St-IV-1.15), an online financial literacy learning tool that also offers students a better understanding of topics related to the financial aid processes and options including student loan management and repayment. This diagnostic tool is customized and adapts as students interact with content.

The timely processing of financial aid award letters is a vital approach in the recruitment of potential students as they consider college costs. The Financial Aid (FA) Office recognizes this importance by coordinating all essential processes in an efficient manner. These include the import of Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) data, collection of required documents, packaging of financial aid, and notification of students. The aid is continually reviewed for course additions and withdrawals and mid-term grades according to federal and state guidelines on processing financial aid awards as prescribed by the Financial Aid Manual. (EVID: St-IV-1.16; St-IV-1.17).

The Financial Aid Office works closely with the Clinton Community College Foundation, which currently supports students with 57 scholarships that award on average \$140,000 annually. To simplify access to all scholarships,

students complete one application for all available Foundation scholarships (EVID: St-IV-1.18) and, based on submitted information, their eligibility for specific scholarships is determined. Students are notified about their scholarship awards by email and the information is included in their financial aid award letters available through their Student Portal. To support student retention, the Foundation also provides emergency funds for students in need (e.g., payment for textbooks/laptops or bus passes). Such needs are typically identified in a conversation between a student and a staff member who communicates the concern to the Financial Aid Office, which then works with the Foundation to provide support. The Foundation also offers financial support for initiatives such as student development grants, which provide funding for students to attend conferences or curriculum-related events. Another example is the Human Services exploratory series for which the Foundation funds the cost of three key courses for students to learn more about the program and determine if it meets their career aspirations.

Non-credit and workforce development trainings do not qualify for federal or state grants and loans; however, there are alternate sources of financial aid available. For example, through collaboration with the county workforce development consortium and their NutraSource office, funding is available to eligible students for workforce training. In addition, loans for non-credit study are available through Sallie Mae. Both financial options are communicated to non-credit students by email and are listed on the community and workforce development webpage (EVID: St-IV-1.19). Costs for all non-credit courses and trainings are listed on the College website.

Financial aid outreach and education on financial literacy are provided to prospective and current students. The Financial Aid Office organizes and participates in a SUNY Financial Day, where students can get individualized help with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The office is actively engaged in student events such as Fall Festival and Operation Registration, and it offers workshops on the impact of academic progress on financial aid and individualized financial aid help sessions. For students with loans, the Financial Aid Office holds mandatory entrance and exit counseling sessions (EVID: St-IV-1.20).

### **Academic Placement**

Clinton Community College supports students at all levels of academic college preparedness and educational backgrounds. To ensure that students are able to succeed academically, an appropriate course placement in English and math courses is an integrated part of the new students' registration process and involves staff and faculty from Admissions, Academic Advising and Student Support, Academic Affairs, Tutoring Center, and, as needed, Accommodative Services.

Each semester, the Admissions Office, in collaboration with academic advisors, creates a schedule of registration appointments. A new degree-seeking student needs to choose only one appointment, which will include placement testing, a conversation with an advisor, creation of a class schedule, and registration for courses using the online Student Portal. There are multiple registration appointment times throughout the two months preceding the start of a semester at different times of day in order to accommodate students' schedules. If a student has unique circumstances and cannot attend any of the available times, an individual appointment is set up through the Admissions Office. For distance learning students who cannot come to campus, a learning coordinator sets up a proctored placement test at another college or a verified site. Students are notified about the registration dates through emails and phone calls from the Admissions Office.

Students who have earned previous college credits or attained SAT/ACT scores at a certain level are eligible for a placement test waiver (EVID: St-IV-2.1). Students who are exempt from placement testing are placed in appropriate college level coursework following a review of the students' transcripts by faculty. Prior to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, students who did not meet the exemption criteria needed to take the Accuplacer test for math and reading and compose a short, written essay as the first step of the registration process. The learning coordinators would enter the scores and an English faculty member's essay evaluation

immediately after the test for easy access by advisors to proceed with registration. Students who do not meet college level readiness standards, are placed in appropriate development courses (EVID: St-IV-1.21). The current developmental courses (ENG099, RDG095, MAT090, MAT098, MAT100, and MAT100Q) provide opportunities for students to enhance their skills needed for the college level study. From Fall 2018 to Fall 2020, the percentage of new students who were enrolled in at least one remedial course varied from 35% - 49%.

During the pandemic, the Accuplacer test on campus was replaced with a multiple measures approach to placement, which includes a review of high school transcripts, standardized exam scores, and individual assessments. Students are placed into appropriate developmental or college level coursework based on the following:

- English placement: ACT/SAT scores, high school GPA, English Language Arts Regents exam scores, Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC)/General Education Development (GED) scores, or directed self-placement guided by an advisor (EVID: St-IV-1.22).
- Math placement: Prior math coursework, ACT/SAT scores, high school GPA, math Regents exam scores, AP scores, prior Accuplacer math score, TASC/GED scores, or arithmetic self-assessment (EVID: St-IV-1.23).

To ensure that students requiring developmental coursework have an opportunity for a full-time schedule despite not meeting some college level courses prerequisites, the College offers a series of college level courses that do not require prerequisites or corequisites (EVID: St-IV-1.24). The Learning Disabilities Specialist serves as a dedicated advisor and placement coordinator for students with disabilities.

International students must meet English proficiency as an additional placement evaluation criterion and must provide their TOEFL scores as part of their admissions process (St-IV-1.25). Prior to Spring 2020, high school students in the College Advancement Program (CAP), a concurrent enrollment program, were given the Accuplacer exam in their high schools, which was coordinated and proctored by the College's learning coordinators. This requirement was replaced by multiple measures approach similar to what was implemented on campus, with the inclusion of high school instructors' recommendations. The VPAA and CAP Council will assess the new placement approach to inform decisions for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Although the remediation of under-prepared students is part of its mission, the College also offers unique, customized opportunities to qualified students through its Honors Program described in the section on Standard III. The unique design of the program for extra-curricular learning designed through individual learning contracts enhances students' intellectual development. Qualified students are also able to participate in Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, which provides honor students with many opportunities for community engagement.

### **Support and Onboarding**

In Fall 2020, over 55% of Clinton Community College matriculated students who submitted a FAFSA required financial assistance and qualified as economically disadvantaged. Support and advisement for students starts in the early stages of their enrollment decision process when Admissions advisors discuss with prospective students and applicants the best way to approach their needs within the context of their educational goals. The College provides highly individualized attention to students navigating the application and financial aid processes.

Registration is the next phase of advisement and attention to student needs. This process has undergone three improvements since early 2019. Previously, registration days were long, and each phase had an established timeframe. As a result, students who finished the placement test early had to wait until all testing was completed before moving on to the advisement session. Also, advising was done with students grouped by major and led by a faculty member from the appropriate department. That approach did not allow for the

individualized attention that many students desired and needed. Upon assessment by the Enrollment and Academic Advising and Student Support offices, a proposal was introduced to the academic departments to implement a one-on-one advisement model relying on generalist advisors who would be trained appropriately. A group of advisors participated in the training developed by the Academic Advising and Student Support Office. As a result, a trained faculty advisor is able to advise students in other related majors, thus creating a larger pool of available advisors to meet with students on a rolling basis. Summer 2019 was the first full launch of one-on-one advising, which received positive feedback from students. In Summer 2020, the move to a virtual environment necessitated by the pandemic created an opportunity for another improvement to the advisement model. The Enrollment Management and Academic Affairs offices created new guidelines for virtual one-on-one advising (EVID: St-IV-1.26) utilizing video and phone advisement and registration. Based on student preferences revealed by the advisement evaluation survey, the Enrollment Management Office intends to retain these options, in addition to face-to-face appointments.

To ease students' transition into college, all new students are expected to attend New Student Orientation in the week before the start of a semester. (EVID: St-IV-1.27). Up until 2020, students were required to attend an on campus New Student Orientation that included the following sessions: welcome, panel of student services Q&A, campus safety protocols, Title IX and sexual violence prevention, college success tips, overview of the Student Handbook and Student Portal. The half day program was hosted by the Student Services Support Coordinator and groups were led by trained staff and student volunteers. Student evaluation forms and attendance sheets are collected from students to help with assessment and to guide improvements of the program (EVID: St-IV-6.1).

In 2020, the need for an online version of new student orientation became imminent as the pandemic prevented the College from hosting students in person. A task force was developed and the elements of the in-person program were converted into modules for an online course that all new students were expected to complete.

After the onboarding process is complete, the Student Support Services Coordinator assigns full-time students to faculty advisors based on a student's major and needs. The goal is to create an individual connection between the student and advisor. Advisors can be contacted by email, phone, or in person during office hours; however, greater consistency in advisor availability and outreach would enhance services.

Part-time and returning students are assigned to the Academic Advising and Student Support Office where professional advisors and counselors provide an array of support services including academic advisement. By 2020, this office's staff had been reduced from four to one person through attrition. Reinvesting in this area will be critical to student success. The office sends out weekly emails to students with advising tips, reminders, and encouraging messages. It is also a resource for faculty advisors who find that their students may need personal help beyond what they can provide. For that purpose, the Care Report was created to be utilized by faculty or staff members when they observe or hear of a student who is struggling, regardless of reason (EVID: St-IV-1.28). A sharp increase in the number of Care Reports was observed during the pandemic, up from 26 reports in Fall 2019 (pre-pandemic) to 61 reports in Fall 2020.

In 2016, a review of College advising data revealed a higher need for mental health services among students. As a result, the College partnered with Behavioral Health Services North, a licensed mental health provider to offer school based mental health services to students. This is part of a county wide initiative intended to serve students of all ages with quick access to mental health services they would otherwise not receive through traditional avenues. From 2016 to 2020, over 50 students have been referred to the program with 39 enrolling and engaging in services. Services are confidential and records are maintained off site, protected by the agency protocol for the New York State Department of Mental Health (EVID: St-IV-1.29).

## Student Success and Educational Pathways

To help students achieve their goals, Clinton Community College employs a multi-faceted approach to student support, which is provided collaboratively by various areas of the College. These include Academic Advising and Student Support, Accommodative Services, Tutoring Center, Library, Career Services, Financial Aid, Student Life, Athletics, and Academic Affairs.

For academic learning support, the Tutoring Center helps students become better learners and gives them the tools and confidence to perform at their best. All services offered through the center are free to full-time and part-time students taking day, evening, or online courses. Tutors help students enhance their academic performance with assistance in a wide range of fields such as math (from arithmetic to calculus), science (biology, chemistry, environmental science, and physics), writing, reading, technology, and computer science. Tutoring is provided either individually or in small groups. Many tutors are professional educators who have extensive teaching experience and are committed to the success of the students and all of them have degrees in the applicable fields. The services are available on campus or online (exclusively online during the 2020 pandemic) and include explanation of concepts that students have difficulty understanding, discussion of assignments, feedback on assignments, reinforcement of classroom instruction, and recommendation of appropriate software, videos, worksheets, and handouts.

Clinton Online, the College's online learning management system, supports students proactively with a student welcome video and course sandbox. Once they are enrolled in an online course, students can utilize the Clinton Online Help button in the learning management system (Moodle) or communicate by email at [clintononlinehelp@clinton.edu](mailto:clintononlinehelp@clinton.edu) for assistance. This information, as well as a phone number for Clinton Online, are provided in every Clinton Online course. If the Distance Learning Coordinator is unavailable and a voicemail is left, a digital audio file is sent by email to ensure a quick response. The Clinton Online help email is checked most days including weekends. A link to the Tutoring Center is available at the top of the course page, and tutors are available to help students with their online classes. Students are encouraged to provide feedback using the Student Evaluation of Online Course Instruction form. The evaluations are anonymous and are sent to the faculty after grades have been submitted.

When the number of students enrolled in online classes began to increase, Clinton Online placed resources in its learning management system to support retention and student success. A video tutorial and student sandbox course were created for this purpose. The video provides an overview of Clinton Online and the three major activities in use: discussion forums, assignments, and quizzes. The complement to the video tutorial is the sandbox course where students can participate in various activities as a trial run. There is a Clinton Online staff member enrolled in the course to answer questions and provide feedback on activities.

The Career Services Coordinator was hired in 2017 as a grant funded position. Services provided by the coordinator were intended to benefit the educational experiences of all students and alumni. The College recognizes the relationship among career exploration, academic advisement, experiential learning, and post-graduate readiness in alignment with the College mission. Students are encouraged to develop an awareness about occupational and personal interests, choose a degree program that meets their interests and strengths, and prepare for employment or transfer opportunities. Many workshops, including an annual Career Expo where students had a chance to meet many local employers, were carried out by the Career Services Coordinator and volunteers from the College. When the Career Services Coordinator left the College in 2019, the College did not secure funding or operationalize the position. Currently, the College is working with E.T.S., a local employment agency, to offer career advice, job search preparation, and job placement for graduates (EVID: St-IV-1.30). Other services which had been provided by the Career Services Coordinator are being provided in a very limited and dispersed manner through coursework and academic advisement. However, the College should address the staffing need with a more focused and defined approach for providing these services to students.



## **Academic Advisement**

First-time students are advised and registered by Admissions advisors, Academic Advisement and Student Support Services staff, or faculty volunteers. Following their initial advisement and registration session, students are assigned a faculty advisor with expertise in their specific discipline or degree program. Full-time faculty members may be assigned up to 30 advisees. To help increase student success and retention, advisors are encouraged to reach out to their advisees via email or phone on a regular basis throughout the semester. These informal conversations help advisors to better understand their advisees' academic goals and personal circumstances so that they may provide appropriate guidance and support.

The main functions of the academic advisor are to help their advisees become familiar with their degree program requirements and to assist them with course selection. Students are required to meet with an advisor prior to being enabled for electronic or manual registration. Advisors communicate with their advisees about upcoming course registration periods, processes, and procedures. Students may schedule an advisement appointment via email, phone, or sign-ups posted on the web or office doors. Students may also seek assistance from the Academic Advisement and Student Support Services personnel if their assigned advisor is not available due to other job-related commitments or schedule conflicts. During the pandemic, advisement has been executed primarily via video calling, which has proven effective and may be continued as a post-pandemic meeting option.

Many tools are available to assist academic advisors. An advisement handbook of best practices, created by the Office of Academic Advisement and Student Support Services, is distributed to advisors to orient them to advisement-related resources and procedures. Advisors also have electronic access to student transcripts, degree audits, midterm grades, attendance records, placement testing data, and other resources which contribute to the efficiency of the advisement process.

A special advisement task force was formed in 2019 to address declining enrollment and staffing resources. The group created a plan for a “one-stop-shop” model of service where collaboration among relevant offices would provide more productive interactions with students and more effective support. Part of the plan included reconfiguration of responsibilities for positions at risk of budget-driven elimination. The primary objective was to maintain student support in transfer and post-completion pathways. Unfortunately, with further cuts as well as attrition, the College lost the Career Services staff member and an advisor experienced in transfers and educational pathways, and thus the Academic Advising and Student Support office was left with one person. Because of the shortage of human resources, the plan has not yet been implemented.

## **Accommodative Services**

The Accommodative Services Office serves students with a variety of disabilities and diagnoses, including anxiety, both diagnosed and undiagnosed, which impacts their life and academic functioning. Even prior to the pandemic, students with neurodevelopmental disorders were at high risk for not completing their postsecondary education. Since the pandemic, these challenges have increased as students contend with the demands of remote learning. In the May 2018 Accommodative Services Program Review, it was reported that “The percentage of [Clinton] students with disabilities is approaching 15% of our full-time/part-time matriculated enrollment. There has been an increasing number of students with autism spectrum disorders and significant mental health disorders coming to campus.” To help meet the students' mental health support needs, the Accommodative Services Office developed a strongly integrated collaboration with the Academic Advising and Student Support Office to devise ways to meet those needs through instructional and support-based events and groups. A Student Support Team was created with a task to establish various support for students. The key group members include the Accommodative Services Coordinator, Learning Skills Coordinator, and Academic Advisement and Student Support Coordinator. Other staff and offices, Student Life Office in particular, collaborate with the team when appropriate. Currently, the Accommodative Services Office is in need of modernization, including the processes by which information is provided to current and prospective students.



### **Student Life Initiatives**

Many students attending Clinton Community College face barriers to their success in the form of basic needs. To help them overcome these daily challenges, the College launched the Eagle's Nest Food Pantry in Spring 2018. Any student in need of food and home supplies can confidentially fill out a form indicating who they are, size and composition of their family, and types of products they need. The Director of Campus Life uses the list to give them enough food and supplies for their family for two weeks. Quite often, students are referred to the Food Pantry after disclosing a need to another staff person on campus.

The "Dress for Success" initiative was established by creating a closet filled with new or slightly used professional clothing donated by College employees. Students can choose clothing for job fairs, job or internship interviews, or other professional events. Students tend to learn about the initiative from staff or faculty. To ensure that all students are aware of this service, the College should explore other avenues of promoting it.

### **Student Success Measures**

One way by which the College measures student success is through retention and completion data per various student cohorts. The College reports the outcomes on an annual basis to SUNY, the New York State Education Department, and IPEDS. Additionally, retention and completion data are reported on the College website. Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is evaluated by the Financial Aid and Registrar offices at the end of each semester per federal SAP and New York State regulations. Upon completing the evaluation, dismissed students are notified of their status and informed about the appeal process, which combines academic and financial appeals in one application (EVID: St-IV-1.31). The College needs to consider a coordinated supplemental process for students on probation to support and better safeguard their path to graduation.

### **Transfer Credits and Prior Learning Assessment**

Any degree or certificate candidates may receive credit for similar courses completed at other accredited colleges and universities. The credits may transfer in as required course credit or elective credit. Official transcripts provided by new and returning students at the time of admission are reviewed and evaluated by the Registrar. Transfer credits may be awarded for courses achieved with grades of "C-" or better except for all courses in the Nursing program and some in the Human Services program which require a minimum grade of "C". "Pass" grades are accepted for credit, providing that the course and sending institution meet transfer criteria detailed in the College catalog. Consistent with SUNY policy, each incoming transfer student shall have satisfied a SUNY General Education Requirement (SUNY-GER) category as deemed fulfilled by the sending SUNY institution or as deemed equivalent by course evaluation when coming from a non-SUNY college. (EVID: St-IV-2.2).

The College residency requirement is 15 credits for all degrees except for the A.O.S. degree and certificates, which require six credits. This relatively low residency requirement offers generous transfer opportunities for students to finish their degrees. The College also awards eligible credits for American Council on Education (ACE) evaluated credits as well as professional service through military service schools, Community College of the Air Force, United States American Forces Institute (USAFI) courses, and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). Credit by examination through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) can be transferred with a minimum score equivalent to a grade of "C-" as established by the College Board.

The College awards credit for prior life experience (EVID: St-IV-2.3; St-IV-2.4). Credit is awarded only if sufficient college level learning took place during the documented experience. No credit is given solely for prior job experience. A student looking for credit for prior learning experience works individually with a faculty member who specializes in the subject area to create a portfolio. The credit is usually applied towards Individual Studies programs but can also be used towards other degrees as appropriate. The College recognizes that it needs to strengthen application and approval procedures and make them broadly known.

## Student Information Protection

Clinton Community College treats the security of student information with utmost importance. The College adheres to the SUNY Information Security Policy, which clarifies the role of SUNY campuses in protecting and securing data they possess and transmit (EVID: St-IV-3.2). It starts with an oath of allegiance required by all new employees in the SUNY system (EVID: St-IV-3.3) and continues with strict guidelines and policies on confidentiality. Student records and information release is guided by FERPA compliance (EVID: St-IV-3.4). When Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in online accounts needs to be shared, the College also requires that the provider follows FERPA regulations. Clinton does not bring any identifiable information into its online learning platform except for name and email address. The College uses its own server, and no user data are pushed out or pulled in when creating backups. More detailed information on the topic is covered in the section on Standard II. The Information Technology department is responsible for improving and updating the information security infrastructure. Within the last two years, the department introduced enhanced Virtual Private Network (VPN) connections and security awareness training, and implemented multi-factor authentication for students, staff, and faculty.

Records related to accommodative services for students with disabilities are kept in a locked file and are accessible by the Accommodative Services Office staff only (EVID: St-IV-3.5). The Financial Aid Office has a policy and a procedure for protecting and releasing information. Student identification numbers are used instead of social security numbers to transfer the data to the New York State Higher Education Services Consortium (HESC) to verify and provide student aid (EVID: St-IV-3.6). All student financial data are governed by IT data protection policies required by SUNY and HESC (EVID: St-IV-3.7).

Student health records follow HIPPA requirements, which the Health Office has incorporated in its procedures for storage and release of records (EVID: St-IV-3.8). The campus also offers its students mental health services through a contract with Behavioral Health Services Network (BHSN) through the University of Vermont (UVM) Health Network. All mental health services provided to students are confidential and records are maintained off site, as protected by the agency protocol for the New York State Department of Mental Health.

## Student Life

### Student Activities

The Student Life Office collaborates with the Student Activities Board (SAB) to provide students with various programs and activities each year. During the pandemic, events were hosted in a virtual environment, but the number of events remained consistent, and the virtual format afforded the College the opportunity to make the events available to the local community. Clinton Community College's Campus Life Office coordinates many activities with SUNY Plattsburgh, a four-year college in the area, to give students more opportunities for experiencing diverse activities. The office also participates in many SUNY-wide student events, especially those with multi-campus contracts for big performances, which has proven to be a resourceful strategy given current budget constraints. The College is currently working to launch an E-sports program for students in 2022.

All student events are listed in the events calendar on the website, are communicated to students by email, and advertised on the campus digital signboards. Meetings dates for the Student Senate and Student Activities Board are also listed in these locations. College employees from across the campus volunteer to help and support these activities. Students are encouraged to submit their own event ideas via the Student Activities Board webpage (EVID: St-IV-4.1), take on leadership roles, and contribute to the enhancement of the campus life experience. Student clubs are run by students with a faculty advisor providing oversight and guidance. There were 17 active student clubs as of Spring 2021. Some of them, like the Criminal Justice and Psychology clubs, augment co-curricular interests of the student body. Other clubs provide students an outlet for their hobbies, such as the Sci-Fi and Drama clubs. Students can create a new club by finding a faculty advisor and gathering 20 signatures (EVID: St-IV-4.2). The formation of any new club must be approved by the Student Senate. Clubs

often organize recruitment fairs and host educational and fundraising events to promote awareness and foster community engagement among students.

The Student Senate allocates funding for all clubs and student activities. Contracts for events proposed by the Student Activities Board are submitted to the Dean of Student Affairs for review. After receiving written permission to proceed, the contract is sent to the company and a purchase order is created.

## **Athletics**

Clinton Community College participates in intercollegiate athletics at the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division III level within Region III and the Mountain Valley Athletic Conference. Currently, men's and women's intercollegiate athletic programs are offered in soccer, basketball, and cross country. Men's baseball and women's softball programs were discontinued in 2015 and 2017, respectively, due to budget and scheduling issues. In addition, the programs were hampered by challenges in maintaining a sufficient number of participants and poor spring weather conditions in the North Country. Cross country was added as an intercollegiate sport in September 2019, with four women and five men participating. During the 2019-2020 academic year, 48 athletes participated on the six sport teams, and a total of 150 athletes participated over the span of 2017-2020. All student athletes are required to comply with College policies and NJCAA guidelines, which require all active student athletes to be full-time students and to maintain GPA standards and progress toward degree completion (EVID: St-IV-4.3).

All athletic programs are approved by the Board of Trustees. Prior to Fall 2019, the Faculty Student Association managed the athletic fee funding. Currently, athletic programs are supported by two funding sources: an \$8 per student athletic fee, which is used to pay coaches and trainers, and a \$10 per student activity fee managed by the Student Senate, which is used for expenses related to uniforms, equipment, travel, lodging, and conference dues. Each year, the Director of Athletics creates a proposed budget and presents it to the Student Senate for approval. Sport specific budgets are reviewed and voted upon by the Student Senate and approved by the President.

Coaches are subcontracted and are responsible for the recruitment of student athletes for their respective sports. The Admissions Office provides recruitment materials and office support and refers student athletes to coaches when students have indicated their interest in intercollegiate athletic participation. Coaches are also in charge of academic monitoring and support with varying levels of involvement. In 2018, the men's basketball program instituted the Basketball Scholars Program, which was initiated and implemented by a faculty volunteer. The purpose of the program is to enhance players' academic success by monitoring academic progress and providing tutoring support as needed (EVID: St-IV-4.4). The College will look for ways to expand such programs beyond men's basketball to strengthen student athlete success when sufficient funding and staffing is available.

The athletic programs at Clinton Community College provide valuable recruitment and retention benefits. In addition to boosting full-time enrollment, student athletes—especially those from outside the North Country—bring a diversity of life experiences to the campus. In recognition of this potential for enrollment growth and student retention, support for athletic programs should be given higher priority in enrollment planning and budgeting. One step taken by the College to address the reduction in athletic program staffing was the creation of the Sports Information Coordinator position in June 2021. An existing College employee is paid a stipend to attend at all home athletic contests, file paperwork related to sporting events, and serve as a liaison between the part-time Athletic Director and the College. Although student feedback is informally gathered, a systematic evaluation process for intercollegiate athletics and intramural experiences has not been instituted, pointing to an opportunity for improvement.

## **Campus Safety**

The College treats the safety and well-being of each member of the College community and visitors to the campus as a priority. In 2019 the College developed a partnership with the Clinton County Sheriff's Department and switched from a private security company to employing sheriff's deputy officers to provide campus safety services. The officers interact daily with the campus community to show they are accessible and approachable. A Campus Safety Protocol document, containing the names and phone numbers of individuals to be contacted in both emergency and non-emergency situations, is disseminated to the campus (EVID: St-IV-4.5).

## **Third-party Providers of Student Services**

Clinton Community College provides several third-party services to support and enhance student success. These providers either supplement services offered at the College or are stand-alone services that the College does not otherwise offer. Organizations which provide student-oriented services include Behavioral Health Service North for confidential and personal counseling; E.T.S., a local employment agency, for career advising; and EdSights, for collecting real-time non-cognitive data from students about their college experience.

Other services include the "24/7 Librarian" which gives students online access to a librarian at any time; SUNY ReEnroll Program in which financial aid advisors reach out to students at risk of defaulting their student loans; and Clinton County Public Transportation, which entered into an agreement with the College to adjust its route to include a stop at the College. Students can find information about bus routes and schedules on the College website and can purchase discounted tickets on the bus.

The decision to engage a third-party vendor begins with identifying a need and considering various options for meeting it. The department initiating the proposal to acquire the service conducts a thorough review of vendors and pricing following county and state procurement policies as applicable (EVID: St-IV-5.1). The proposal is reviewed by the President's Cabinet, and final approval by the Controller and President must be obtained before a vendor contract is signed or renewed. As contracts come up for renewal, the lead administrator assesses the effectiveness of the vendor services before seeking funding and approval for the renewal. Third-party vendors are subject to relevant College policies, including the Policy on Workplace Violence and Mandatory Reporting and Prevention of Child Abuse (St-IV-5.2).

## **Assessments of Student Experience Programs**

All offices providing student services engage in an annual administrative assessment to determine if the previous year's goals and objectives were achieved, to address the reasons that any goals were not met, and to establish goals for the following year (EVID: St-IV-6.2). The assessment process relies on data collected from the student satisfaction survey, climate survey, and student orientation surveys (EVID: St-IV-6.3; St-IV-6.4). In addition, operational data are gathered by individual offices such as usage data in the Tutoring Center, application and conversion numbers in the Admissions Office, and advisement participation and student progress data in the Academic Advising and Student Support Office (EVID: St-IV-6.5; St-IV-6.6).

## **Conclusion**

The research conducted for this self-study reveals that the College admits and serves students of varying abilities, needs, and goals. The faculty and staff of Clinton Community College are committed to student success, and they work collaboratively and resourcefully to provide a supportive learning environment.

Procedures that support recruitment and student success are clearly defined and followed. The College offers a safe and secure student experience by complying with state and federal regulations and following procedures for accessing and using student information records. Particular attention is paid to providing financial assistance to students, as the majority of Clinton Community College students could not attend without financial support.

In alignment with the College's commitment to open access, students can take advantage of many preparatory courses as well as generous credit transfer policies and experiential learning, which allow them to create more effective paths to a degree. The processes and services offered are planned and assessed regularly to ensure continuing and valuable support for all students.

























































The shared commitment and collaboration among staff have enabled the College to maintain student services at a satisfactory level. However, student supports may eventually become compromised if the staffing situation is not improved, especially after students return to campus post pandemic. This study also revealed that while the fiscal and administrative procedures for student life, athletics, and third-party providers follow approved policies and shared governance guidelines, an improved system of evaluating and tracking policies and contracts would be helpful in assessing those services.

### **Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation**

- Align staffing priorities with student needs for services and support.
- Promote greater consistency in advisor availability and outreach to students.
- Develop a support process for students on probation for safeguarding their path to graduation.
- Modernize the processes by which the Accommodative Services Office provides information to promote accessibility and a safe environment for students with disabilities.
- Promote the Individual Studies programs as degree completion options for students who temporarily withdraw from the College.
- Expand the assessment of athletic programs to include student feedback and a coach evaluation.
- Establish a standardized method for reviewing and documenting third-party provider contracts.
- Increase student awareness of available relief services such as the food pantry and emergency scholarships provided by the Foundation.



## Standard IV Supporting Documents

-  St-IV-1.1 CCC Positioning Statement
-  St-IV-1.2 Student Consumer Information Webpage
-  St-IV-1.3 Recruiting\_Admissions Process Models
-  St-IV-1.4 Enroll Mgmt Report 2019-2020
-  St-IV-1.5 Example--Daily Enrollment Mgmt Data
-  St-IV-1.6 Degrees & Certificates Webpage
-  St-IV-1.7 Academic Program Guide 2019-2020
-  St-IV-1.8 CCC Catalog 2021-22 (Section 2)
-  St-IV-1.9 Admissions Checklist Webpage
-  St-IV-1.10 Tuition & Fees Webpage
-  St-IV-1.11 CCC Catalog 2021-22 (Section 2 p.18)
-  St-IV-1.12 Completing Your Bill Webpage
-  St-IV-1.13 Financial Information Important Dates Webpage
-  St-IV-1.14 SUNY Net Price Calculator
-  St-IV-1.15 SUNY Smart Track Home Page
-  St-IV-1.16 Fin Aid Policy Manual (Section 12)
-  St-IV-1.17 Fin Aid Procedure Manual (pp.6-7)
-  St-IV-1.18 Fin Aid Policy Manual (Section 11)
-  St-IV-1.19 CCWD Home Page
-  St-IV-1.20 Fin Aid Procedure Manual-Entrance and Exit Counseling
-  St-IV-1.21 CCC Catalog 2021-22 (Section 5, pp. 87\_97\_104)
-  St-IV-1.22 English Placement Form for SU20 and FA20
-  St-IV-1.23 Math Placement Form for SU21 and FA21
-  St-IV-1.24 Courses eligible to take with ENG101S and RDG095
-  St-IV-1.25 International Students Webpage
-  St-IV-1.26 Remote Advisement\_Registration Process for Fall 2020
-  St-IV-1.27 CCC Catalog 2021-22 (Section 3, p.44)
-  St-IV-1.28 Care Report
-  St-IV-1.29 Behavior Health Services North Letter
-  St-IV-1.30 Career Services Webpage
-  St-IV-1.31 Student Appeals Information
-  St-IV-2.1 CCC Catalog 2021-22 (Section 2, pp.8-9)
-  St-IV-2.2 CCC Catalog 2021-22 (Section 2, pp.10-11)
-  St-IV-2.3 CCC Catalog 2021-22 (Section 2, p.15)
-  St-IV-2.4 Life Experience Credit Webpage
-  St-IV-3.1 CCC Policies and Procedures (Section 2002)
-  St-IV-3.2 SUNY Information Security Policy
-  St-IV-3.3 Oath of Allegiance
-  St-IV-3.4 CCC Catalog 2021-22 (Section 6; pp.127-128)
-  St-IV-3.5 Procedure for Securing Records of Students with Disabilities
-  St-IV-3.6 Fin Aid Policy Manual (Section 2.4)
-  St-IV-3.7 NYS HESC- New Student Identification File Rules
-  St-IV-3.8 Health Records Management Procedure
-  St-IV-4.1 Student Activities Board Webpage
-  St-IV-4.2 How to Start a Club Webpage
-  St-IV-4.3 NJCAA Eligibility Pamphlet
-  St-IV-4.4 Basketball Scholars Summary
-  St-IV-4.5 Safety Contact Protocol 2020
-  St-IV-5.1 Purchasing Accounts Payable Policy Procedure
-  St-IV-5.2 CCC Policies and Procedures (Section 1110-1111)
-  St-IV-6.1 Summary of Student Evaluation Fall 2019 Orientation
-  St-IV-6.2 Enroll Mgmt Admin Assessment EOY 2018-19
-  St-IV-6.3 CCC Orientation Survey Data
-  St-IV-6.4 SUNY Student Opinion Survey Results\_Clinton 2019
-  St-IV-6.5 Tutoring Center Workshop\_STEM Data
-  St-IV-6.6 Application Conversion Data



**Standard V:  
Educational Effectiveness Assessment**



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

*"Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education."* (Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards for Accreditation, Standard V).

### **Overview**

Clinton Community College has made great strides in expanding and formalizing its assessment processes over the last ten years and continues to incorporate systematic assessment into all levels of institutional planning and decision-making. Assessment of student learning and achievement engenders participation from across the entire academic division. Faculty and academic support staff use multiple approaches to evaluate educational effectiveness and engage stakeholders in conversations about the quality, consistency, and relevancy of academic offerings and services, resulting in actions aimed at helping students to realize their educational goals. This purposeful attention to student learning and achievement directly aligns with the institutional priorities Student Success, Teaching, and Learning and Educational and Employment Pathways.

### **Systematic Educational Effectiveness Assessment**

Institutional effectiveness planning engages all operational areas of the College in deliberate and routine assessment. The [2021 Institutional Effectiveness Plan](#) describes the administrative and academic assessment processes that drive the institutional effectiveness assessment cycle (EVID: St-V-2.1). Detailed information about administrative assessment and its alignment to planning and resources is addressed in the section on Standard VI.

Academic assessment falls under the purview of the Academic Affairs Division and is overseen by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The division consists of 10 academic discipline departments (Business and Accounting, Criminal Justice, English, History and Political Science, Humanities, Mathematics, Nursing, Science, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Technology) and five academic support areas (Accommodative Services, Center for Community and Workforce Development, Distance Learning, Library, and Tutoring Center). The academic departments participate in systematic assessment in multiple ways including annual goals assessment, academic program reviews, and learning outcomes assessment.

### **Annual Academic Goals Assessment**

As described in the section on Standard III, the strategic plan provides the foundation for academic goals assessment. The annual process begins at the start of the fall semester, when the VPAA shares the academic affairs goals with the chairs of the academic discipline departments and the staff of the academic support areas (EVID: St-V-1.1). In turn, each academic department develops a plan, which includes department goals, measurable objectives, tasks, responsible party, target date, and status and specifies the alignment of each department goal with the academic affairs goals and the College's strategic goals. Department chairs, or designated staff members in the case of academic support areas, submit their plans to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs in September. The VPAA reviews the department plans and provides feedback as appropriate.

If the fulfillment of a departmental goal requires a significant allocation of resources beyond what is funded by the typical annual budgeting process (e.g., a new faculty position or compensation for developing a new program), the department chair meets with the VPAA to discuss alignment to the mission and priorities, campus and community need, and feasibility of resource allocation. If the initiative has the support of the VPAA, it is presented to the Strategic Planning Committee and follows the Procedures for Annual Planning Decisions as outlined in the Strategic Planning Procedure Manual (EVID: St-V-3.1).

Department plan objectives are discussed throughout the year at regular monthly department meetings, and task completion status is updated as appropriate. At the end of the academic year, each department reviews its annual plan to measure progress on the specified tasks and discusses any additional actions to be taken (EVID: St-V-2.2). The completed department plans, with end-of-year status updates, are submitted to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and are posted in the Academic Affairs site in the Information Repository.

### **Academic Program Review Assessment**

The academic program review process is a periodic, peer-reviewed evaluation of each of the College's registered academic programs that seeks to inform opportunities for improvement and maintain program relevancy through the collection and analysis of program and student outcomes data. The Faculty Council Assessment Committee is responsible for coordinating and facilitating the academic program review timeline and process (EVID: St-V-2.3).

In 2017, Clinton Community College adopted a five-year cycle for academic degree program reviews (EVID: St-V-2.4). The plan calls for a formal review of all associate degree and certificate programs once every five years. A guide developed by the Assessment Committee provides detailed information to program faculty about the comprehensive self-study process and timeline (EVID: St-V-2.5). The five phases of the program review process are 1) data collection, 2) self-study process, 3) internal review, 4) external review, and 5) compilation of program review. Until recently, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning directly supported the faculty designated to write an academic program review by providing institutional and programmatic data for the report. Since March 2020, following the departure of the data analyst, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning has been vacant, and the responsibility for providing the necessary program data has fallen to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Enrollment Management. Other data used in the self-evaluation report are obtained from the department chairs or compiled by the reviewers. During the self-study writing phase, the Assessment Committee, in conjunction with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator, works closely with the reviewing departments to guide the process and provide feedback. The self-study report may include but is not limited to the following content areas (EVID: St-V-2.6).

1. College overview
2. Program overview, to include the program mission and goals and their connection to the institution's mission
3. Progress made since previous review
4. Program administration and operations
5. Program curriculum, to include the rationales for changes made to the curriculum since last review, mode of delivery and frequency of course offerings, and general education coursework
6. Program faculty, to include qualifications, responsibilities, and service to the College and community
7. Program students, to include demographics, need for remediation, and student satisfaction
8. Student outcomes, to include persistence, graduation, and transfer data
9. Learning outcomes assessment, to include program learning outcomes and general education learning outcomes
10. Recruitment and retention initiatives
11. Recommendations

The final phases of the peer-reviewed evaluation are the internal and external review processes. The internal review process includes review and approval of the self-study document by the hosting department(s), review by the designated members of the Assessment Committee, and review and approval by the VPAA. The program review process culminates with an external review by a panel of professionals in the field. At minimum, the review team includes one member of Clinton Community College from outside the reviewing department and two professionals from outside the College working in the same discipline or a related field. In addition to

reviewing the program review document, the external team conducts interviews with program faculty and students, and with administrators; makes recommendations to the reviewing department(s); and submits a final report to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (EVID: St-V-2.7).

Under the previous seven-year assessment cycle, progress on program review recommendations were reported biennially and submitted to the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (EVID: St-V-2.8). Under the current five-year cycle, the recommendations of the program faculty and the external review team are incorporated into the annual department goals assessment. Program review recommendations are discussed in department meetings and joint meetings of departments held explicitly for this purpose.

Although the program review assessment process is well established and provides meaningful information about the quality of the College's academic programs, several challenges exist. The most significant impact on the process can be attributed to the decline in student enrollment, which has led to a reduced faculty and staff population through attrition. Consequently, fewer faculty members are available to serve as program review writers. Clerical support for program review writers has diminished over the past five years. Currently, there is only one typist available to assist the academic departments, so most writers do not receive any clerical help. With the present vacancy in the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, obtaining institutional and programmatic data is cumbersome, and more of the work of accessing necessary data reports falls to the program review writers.

### **Program Learning Outcomes Assessment**

The program learning outcomes assessment mission is to improve and support student learning by systematically evaluating student performance using agreed upon program-specific learning outcomes. Program learning outcomes assessment focuses on the learning experiences that lead to the success of program graduates in achieving educational and career goals in accordance with the College mission. The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator (SLOAC), staffed by a full-time faculty member who receives a load reduction, oversees program learning outcomes assessment and general education learning outcomes assessment. Program learning outcomes assessment is cyclical with three phases: 1) planning, 2) implementing, and 3) reflecting and making improvements (EVID: St-V-2.9).

In the initial planning stage, the SLOAC works with the program faculty to create a program learning outcomes assessment plan (EVID: St-V-2.10). The first step of this process is to develop (for new programs) or modify (as needed for existing programs) the program learning outcomes that describe the core competencies that graduates of the academic program are expected to achieve. These outcomes are aligned with the program mission and goals, which are posted for each degree program on the College website (EVID: St-V-1.2). The targeted learning outcomes are integrated with the list of required program courses by means of a curriculum map to help determine the course(s) in which the learning outcomes can best be measured. The program learning outcomes are also mapped to the institutional learning outcomes to identify any gaps in core competencies. After solidifying the program learning outcomes, faculty develop an assessment matrix which aligns objectives to be measured with the established program learning outcomes and indicates the assessment measure to be used, the criteria for assignment to each of the achievement levels, the person responsible, and the semester in which the learning outcomes will be assessed. In subsequent cycles, the information is reviewed and updated as needed.

The implementation phase is ongoing and involves the collection and analysis of student learning outcomes data. The target is to assess every program learning outcome at least once in a three-year cycle. The number of students who have exceeded, met, or failed to meet the standard set by the program faculty is recorded for each objective. Faculty indicate the actions, if any, that will be taken as a result of the assessment (EVID: St-V-2.11).

Program learning outcomes assessment plans are housed in the Program Learning Outcomes Assessment site in SharePoint. The SLOAC, department chairs, program coordinators, and key faculty members may edit the



documents associated with their programs. Program learning outcomes assessment results are discussed in department meetings and occasional joint meetings of multiple departments. After a cycle is completed, a new assessment plan is developed based on what was learned from the previous cycle. Any proposed actions that involve a significant curricular change are vetted through the established governance processes.

Program learning outcomes assessment at the College has come a long way in the last decade. The efforts of the first learning outcomes assessment coordinators set the stage for the work being done today. Although progress is continually being made, the process of creating a fully developed assessment plan is lengthy and involved. With 24 programs to assess in various stages of development and implementation, keeping all programs on track with their assessment timelines is challenging. A shrinking faculty body is tasked with carrying out multiple forms of learning outcomes assessment; thus, the time needed to dedicate to each type of assessment is at a premium. As program faculty are lost through attrition, the remaining faculty members are obligated to pick up additional learning outcomes assessment work, requiring modifications to existing plans to address new assessment tools, measures, and timelines in addition to collecting, recording, and addressing assessment results.

### **General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment**

As detailed in the section on Standard III, Clinton Community College's General Education Program mirrors the State University of New York General Education Requirement (SUNY-GER) adopted by the SUNY Board of Trustees in 1998 and revised in 2010. In accordance with the guidelines set by SUNY, Clinton Community College developed a comprehensive plan for assessing general education student learning outcomes (EVID: St-V-2.12). The learning outcomes established by SUNY for each of the ten subject areas and two competencies are assessed following a three-year cycle (EVID: St-V-2.13). Clinton Community College is currently in its seventh cycle of general education learning outcomes assessment. The College's plan embraces a course-embedded approach to assessment, as these assessments are most closely aligned with teaching and learning. Student learning is measured directly using a post-test methodology that employs the use of quiz and test questions, portfolios, presentations, projects, or papers. When a general education course is assessed, all sections of that course are included in the assessment, regardless of the format in which they are delivered (in-person, asynchronous online, or hybrid) or by whom (full-time College faculty, adjunct College faculty, or high school teachers in the College Advancement Program).

The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator is responsible for facilitating the general education assessment process at the College. These responsibilities include providing documentation and guidance to faculty assessors, assisting with data compilation and presentation, distributing assessment surveys, collecting assessment results and survey responses, posting assessment documents in the General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment Repository, and preparing annual general education assessment reports for the VPAA.

General education learning outcomes assessment is cyclical and consists of three phases: 1) planning, 2) implementation, and 3) reflecting and making recommendations (EVID: St-V-2.14). If a course is being assessed for the first time, the SLOAC works directly with the faculty involved to provide guidance during the development of the assessment planning grid and instruments. If a general education course is taught as part of the College Advancement Program, the discipline-specific liaison, who is a full-time Clinton Community College faculty member, assists the high school partners in the implementation of the learning outcomes assessment (EVID: St-V-2.15). During the planning stage of subsequent cycles, faculty assessors review and update the assessment documents used in the previous cycle. This process includes reviewing the assessment planning grid to verify that the course objectives are aligned to the SUNY learning outcomes and that the achievement levels for each learning outcome are clearly defined (EVID: St-V-2.16). Assessment instruments are also reviewed and updated per the results of the previous assessment cycle. The implementation stage involves delivering the assessment instrument(s) to the students in the course, scoring the students' work, tallying the data, assigning students to the appropriate achievement categories, and recording the results (EVID: St-V-2.17). During the reflecting stage, all faculty assessors review the results and note any major findings as well as specific challenges

faced during the process. This information is used to make recommendations for improvement. Finally, faculty assessors comment on the impact, if any, the changes made as a result of the previous assessment had on the results of the current assessment. This information is submitted to the SLOAC via the General Education Assessment Survey (EVID: St-V-2.18), and the responses are summarized in the annual General Education Campus Report (EVID: St-V-2.19).

After 19 years of formalized general education learning outcomes assessment, the process has become a part of the culture of teaching and learning at Clinton Community College. Even so, the decrease in the number of students, faculty, and staff members over the past several years has affected this established practice. One of the most significant impacts has been on interpreting the results of general education learning outcomes assessment. Diminished class sizes mean smaller sample sizes are available for assessment purposes. These limited data sets make it difficult for faculty to make decisions about changes to curriculum or pedagogy, and they increase the risk of making improper inferences about the aggregate population. With fewer sections of general education courses offered, many faculty members are teaching four or more different courses in a semester and may be required to assess multiple general education courses at one time. As with other assessment processes, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the implementation of general education assessment. Many faculty members had to modify the assessment instruments to support the new modes of remote delivery. The restrictions due to the pandemic made it especially challenging for department chairs and liaisons to support adjunct faculty and high school teachers in the College Advancement Program who were responsible for carrying out assessment of general education learning outcomes. The inability to hold traditional face-to-face meetings made it even more difficult, in some cases, to get buy-in from high school partners to participate in assessment activities.

### **Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment**

Clinton Community College developed its Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) to highlight the core skills, knowledge, and awareness that will prepare students to be successful in further education and their careers. A taskforce was assembled in 2017 to research and draft the institutional learning outcomes, with input from department chairs and program coordinators. Eight outcome categories resulted from that process: Written Communication, Oral Communication, Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning, Aesthetic Appreciation, Technological Competence, Information Literacy, Global Awareness and Cultural Diversity, and Personal Development (EVID: St-V-1.3). The ILOs are embedded in the learning experiences of all Clinton Community College degree program graduates. Each degree program maps its course requirements to the ILOs, and program faculty discuss the degree to which each outcome is met in the existing curriculum and identify any gaps in addressing these outcomes (EVID: St-V-1.4). The Institutional Learning Outcomes encompass many of the general education learning outcomes that are included and regularly assessed in program curriculum.

### **Assessment by Third-Party Providers**

The Center for Community and Workforce Development (CCWD), which oversees the non-credit offerings within the division of Academic Affairs, offers a number of programs that are designed, delivered, and assessed by third-party providers (EVID: St-V-4.1). The review and approval process for new third-party offerings begins with a vetting by the Community and Workforce Development Specialist. Consideration is given to highly rated programming that aligns with the College mission and meets a need of local business or the greater community. Third-party provider requests that pass the prescreening phase are sent to the VPAA for review and, if deemed appropriate, approval.

The decision to continue to offer programming through a third-party provider begins with a review of enrollment numbers, student satisfaction, and breakeven costs. Based on the analysis provided by the CCWD Specialist, the VPAA makes recommendations about which programming should be offered, with the final determination made by the President's Cabinet. Some examples of coursework and certifications delivered exclusively by third-party providers are described in the section on Standard III.



Methods used to assess learning outcomes in non-credit coursework vary by provider and type of training. As an example, Clinton Community College has partnered with the University of South Florida to provide online Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training in General Industry and Construction. Coursework is based on federal OSHA standards, and student assessment of each course is accomplished by means of a final exam. Another example of CCWD programming that uses curriculum controlled by outside agencies is the coursework adopted by the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The Pre-Licensing Course uses a syllabus prepared by New York State DMV, which includes a mission statement and learning outcomes. Assessment of student learning is accomplished through student participation in classroom activities and satisfaction of the five-hour seat time requirement. The Defensive Driving Course is a New York DMV-approved course provided by the New York Safety Council. Satisfaction of 320 minutes of mandated coursework is considered successful completion of the course. The Impaired Driver Program (IDP) is a New York State initiative that uses prescribed course materials to provide an in-depth education on high-risk choices and behaviors. Assessment of learning objectives occurs through student participation and completion of required seat time.

### **Other Academic Assessment Processes**

Clinton Community College employs several additional methods of collecting data for the purpose of improving instruction and student learning. These include student course opinion surveys, targeted student and faculty surveys, and classroom observations.

The Student Course Opinion Survey is an anonymous evaluation tool distributed to students at the end of the semester in accordance with the timetable specified in the Faculty Association contract. All full-time and part-time faculty members are contractually obligated to participate in the student course evaluation (EVID: St-V-2.20). The current instrument consists of 24 instructor and course specific questions, seven student specific questions, and an open response section for individual comments (EVID: St-V-2.21). For in-person sections, paper copies of the course opinion survey are distributed to students in the classroom, without the instructor present (EVID: St-V-2.22). For distance learning courses (and for all courses taught remotely during the pandemic), the survey instrument is distributed and submitted online. In all cases, the department secretary summarizes the student evaluations and returns aggregate survey results to the individual instructors after final grades are submitted. A copy is sent to the appropriate department chair. Instructors of non-credit workshops and trainings are encouraged, but not required, to distribute a student course opinion survey to participants. If an instructor chooses to give the survey, the CCWD Specialist aggregates the results and shares them with the instructor; a copy is kept on file in the office of CCWD (EVID: St-V-4.2).

In addition to the systematic collection of student course opinion data, many faculty and staff members use informal, targeted surveys to obtain immediate feedback from students about perceived understanding of subject matter, usefulness of course materials, or course delivery and pedagogical preferences. An example of this is the student opinion survey administered by one of the full-time librarians following course-related presentations on conducting research. The purpose of the survey was to gauge student opinion of the effectiveness of the session to help plan for future sessions (EVID: St-V-3.2).

Educational effectiveness assessment data are also provided in the form of classroom observation reports. The report addresses observed teaching effectiveness in two categories: Subject Matter and Instruction (11 items) and Rapport with Students (five items) (EVID: St-V-2.23). Adjunct faculty are observed by the appropriate department chair according to the timetable set out in the Adjunct Faculty Handbook as detailed in the section on Standard III. Similarly, site visits are made to classes in the College Advancement Program according to a schedule developed by the CAP liaison (EVID: St-V-2.24; EVID: St-V-2.25). Classroom observation ratings and feedback are shared with the observed instructor for review. The instructor has the option of scheduling a one-on-one meeting with the chair or liaison to discuss the visitation. Copies of adjunct and concurrent enrollment faculty classroom observation reports are kept on file in the appropriate discipline department and in the Office of the VPAA. In addition to the scheduled classroom observations of adjunct and CAP faculty, full-time faculty

may request a supervisor or peer classroom observation for purposes of reappointment, promotion, awards, or professional growth.

## **Communicating the Results of Academic Assessment**

Transparency and accessibility are essential components of institutional effectiveness assessment. Academic assessment results are made available to stakeholders in a number of ways including the College intranet and website, business meetings, email communication, and town hall forums.

### **Internal Access to Educational Effectiveness Data**

Institutional assessment planning and reporting documents can be accessed by College employees through the Information Repository (EVID: St-V-2.26). Assessment documents housed in the repository include the [2021 Institutional Effectiveness Plan, 2021-2022 Enrollment Management Report](#), 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, Middle States self-study and progress reports, annual administrative and academic department assessment reports, academic program reviews, general education assessment plans and data reports, and Student Opinion Survey results. Although the process of locating documents was considerably expedited by the implementation of the Information Repository, it became clear during the Middle States self-study research phase that a site dedicated exclusively to institutional effectiveness would not only facilitate accessibility of assessment data but also underscore the importance of institutional assessment. An Institutional Effectiveness site was launched in SharePoint in [Fall 2021](#) (EVID: St-V-2.27).

### **Public Access to Student Outcomes Data**

Student outcomes data are reported on the College website. Internal constituents and external stakeholders can access retention, graduation, and transfer rates by cohort (race, ethnicity, gender, Pell grant and Stafford loan recipients), view a comparison of Clinton Community College retention and graduation rates to national averages, and find the College's ACEN-accredited nursing program graduation, employment, and NCLEX-RN exam pass rates (EVID: St-V-2.28). The website also contains links to external resources which provide additional assessment data about the College and program graduates. The College Navigator provides retention and graduation statistics for Clinton Community College, in addition to financial and enrollment data (EVID: St-V-2.29). The SUNY *gradwages* interactive dashboard utilizes New York State Department of Labor wage data combined with its own academic data to depict potential wages earned by graduates in active programs of study (EVID: St-V-2.30). In addition to student outcomes data, accreditation status and links to accreditation actions can be found on the College website in the Student Consumer Information section and on a webpage dedicated to the 2021-2022 Middle States accreditation self-study.

### **Actively Communicating Assessment Results to Stakeholders**

Beyond making assessment data accessible to stakeholders, results are purposefully communicated within the campus community to inform and plan. As depicted in the academic assessment cycle schematic (EVID: St-V-2.31), assessment results are regularly shared among committees and departments for use in reporting, supporting initiatives, and planning for future efforts.

The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is the main conduit for reporting and obtaining academic assessment data. Departmental plans and end-of-year reports are shared with and reviewed by the VPAA, as are annual general education campus data reports and resulting recommendations. The VPAA also reads each academic program review and receives the external team report. In turn, the VPAA shares academic assessment updates with members of the President's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees. Major proposals born of the academic assessment process are vetted by the VPAA and shared with the Strategic Planning Committee.

Some assessment data are communicated directly with the individuals or groups involved in the specific undertaking. The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator works with department chairs and program review writers to incorporate student learning outcomes data into academic program reviews. Most

academic departments include assessment updates as a standing item on monthly meeting agendas and use this time as an opportunity to report and discuss assessment results and recommendations. Joint department meetings are held as needed to discuss programmatic assessment and resulting actions.

Other avenues used for communicating assessment results are regular meetings of the Academic Council and Faculty Council. As examples, the Distance Learning Coordinator periodically reported online learning retention and success statistics to the Faculty Council body and engaged the membership in discussions about online offerings and pedagogy; the Director of Nursing annually shares the graduate class's NCLEX-RN exam pass rate at a Faculty Council meeting; and Middle States and Strategic Planning updates are standing items on Academic Council, Faculty Council, and Communication Council agendas. Occasionally, town hall forums and emails addressed to the campus community are used by the College President to share progress on assessment initiatives such as the Middle States self-study and campus climate survey.

## **Use of Assessment Results for Improvement of Educational Effectiveness**

Collecting and sharing data are important components of the assessment process, but these activities have limited value if those data are not thoughtfully considered and used to inform subsequent actions. At Clinton Community College, academic assessment results are used to identify what is working well and where opportunities for improvement exist. This information is used to support course and program level improvements, as well as to guide planning for academic support services and professional development activities.

### **Course Level Improvements**

As part of the ongoing learning outcomes assessment processes, faculty are provided opportunities to address the effectiveness of actions previously taken to improve teaching and learning and to make recommendations to be implemented in the next cycle. These observations are recorded in the general education assessment surveys and in the "Actions" column of program learning outcomes assessment plans. Course level changes implemented as a part of this process include improvements to course content, activities, delivery, and pacing (EVID: St-V-3.3); quality and accessibility of resources (EVID: St-V-3.4); and validity and reliability of assessment instruments (EVID: St-V-3.5).

Responses to student course opinion surveys have also played a role in improving student learning experiences. The aggregate ratings of survey items provide useful information about overall student perceptions, but specific comments about the course, such as the pacing of the topics and the value of the course materials and activities, have resulted in the most meaningful changes to course delivery. A specific example is the redistribution of topics in the Anatomy & Physiology two-course sequence (BIO228/229). Student feedback indicated that BIO228 was more content heavy than BIO229, which made the first course in the sequence significantly more challenging. As a result, the Science Department moved the muscular system from BIO228 to BIO229 to distribute content more evenly. The Nursing Department approved of this change with the condition that this system be taught first in BIO229 to align with content in the nursing program.

### **Improvements to Student Readiness Measures**

Other significant course level modifications have been made based on analyses of student achievement data. One example is the use of assessment data to determine the appropriate skill and knowledge level needed for success in a course. Based on these data, course prerequisite and corequisite changes have been made to improve student success (EVID: St-V-3.6).

### **Program Level Improvements**

Program level changes, too, are initiated and supported by assessment practices. Data are regularly used to inform decision-making related to the general education program, academic degree programs, and remedial coursework.

### Improvements to the General Education Program

The General Education Committee annually reviews the campus general education assessment outcomes report summary and views the student achievement outcomes cycle comparisons for the general education categories assessed the previous year. Conversations surrounding the annual review are aimed at detecting trends and making recommendations about improvements to the program or process. A recent revision to the general education program addressed a loophole in the basic communication requirement for graduates in an A.A. or A.S. degree program. All students were meeting the written expression component of the communication requirement (SUNY learning outcomes 1-3); however, not all A.A./A.S. programs required a course that satisfied the oral expression component (SUNY learning outcomes 4-5). Instead, these programs relied on advisement to encourage students to take an approved oral expression course (COM101). The General Education Committee did an analysis of the percentage of graduates in each A.A./A.S. degree in the last five years that took COM101. Results varied from 0 – 86%. The Humanities and English departments worked together to recommend scenarios that would ensure the oral expression component of the Basic Communication competency is met. Based on this guidance, the General Education Committee developed a proposal that required all A.A./A.S. programs to fulfill both the written and speaking communication learning outcomes via degree requirements and worked with the impacted program faculty to initiate the necessary curricular revisions (EVID: St-V-3.7).

### Improvements to Academic Degree Programs

The academic program review and program learning outcomes assessment processes frequently lead to programmatic changes in response to external recommendations or internal observations of student achievement trends. Many programmatic improvements have been prompted by academic program assessment, including improvements to degree program curricula (EVID: St-V-3.8) and improvements to program assessment measures (EVID: St-V-3.9).

## **Planning for Academic Support Services**

### Informing Tutoring Services

The Tutoring Center relies on student usage data to inform planning and budgeting decisions such as staffing needs, scheduling, and viability of third party online tutoring services. The former STEM Success and Retention Coordinator provided the math and science departments annual reports comparing success of students who use the Tutoring Center to the general population. Additionally, specific skills or knowledge that were identified through learning outcomes assessment as areas in need of improvement were translated into future topics of student workshops hosted by the Tutoring Center (e.g., unit conversions, graphing functions, writing lab reports) (EVID: St-V-3.10).

### Informing the Student Placement Process

The process by which modifications are made to placement criteria is another example of data driven decision-making aimed at improving student success. The English and Math departments implemented several recent changes to the student placement process following the collection and analysis of student achievement data (EVID: St-V-3.11).

### Supporting Professional Development Activities

Assessment data, such as survey responses and student outcomes, have been used in planning a range of professional development activities. A recent example is a remote learning survey that was distributed to full-time and adjunct faculty in the summer of 2020. The Learning Resources Committee reviewed the results and formulated four recommendations for the VPAA. One of the recommendations was “...to further support faculty with training and guidance on best practices for remote teaching.” (EVID: St-V-3.12). This recommendation was operationalized by the Professional Development Committee, which prompted a series of professional development lunchtime Zoom sessions during the Fall 2020 semester addressing best practices.

National student outcomes statistics were used to support the Open Educational Resources (OER) initiative at the College. The data demonstrated that with open materials at no cost to students, a greater number of students persisted to complete classes, student retention and graduation rates increased, and there was a shorter time to graduation. To support this student-centered initiative, the Professional Development Committee hosted a lunchtime workshop about Open Educational Resources, and faculty members were allocated professional development funding to attend workshops on how to use OER to improve student success.

Clinton Community College—notably the VPAA—has demonstrated its genuine support of assessment activities by providing the financial resources needed for the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator to participate in assessment coursework and training. This backing allowed the SLOAC to complete the SUNY Center for Professional Development Learning Outcomes Assessment Advanced Certificate Program and the SUNY Council on Assessment Mentoring Program, as well as attend numerous conferences and workshops hosted by the Association of Institutional Research and Planning Officers, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and SUNY Council on Assessment.

### **Assessment of the Effectiveness of Academic Assessment Processes**

Clinton Community College utilizes existing governance and operational structures to periodically assess the effectiveness of institutional assessment processes.

#### **Review of Academic Goals Assessment**

Academic department goals assessment is regularly reviewed to ensure alignment with current institutional priorities and strategic goals. The VPAA develops the Academic Affairs goals as part of the administrative assessment process, and the Academic Affairs goals, in turn, influence the individual academic department goals. Therefore, any modifications to the administrative assessment process, resulting from updates to the Institutional Effectiveness Plan, adjustments to planning and reporting timelines, or revisions to the administrative assessment template, for example, will ultimately impact the department goals process. The periodic review of administrative assessment processes occurs in meetings of the President’s Cabinet. This process is detailed in the section on Standard VI.

#### **Review of Academic Program Review Assessment**

Standing committees of the Faculty Council provide oversight of some academic assessment processes. The Assessment Committee, which facilitates academic program assessment, makes periodic improvements to the program review process based on feedback from the College community, guidance from external organizations, and best practices from institutional peers. One example of this is the shift from a seven-year cycle of program review to a five-year cycle in 2017, which was a result of guidance provided by Middle States. Another significant change to the program review process was redefining the departments obligated to conduct a full program review. Between 2006 and 2017, full program reviews were required of all academic and student services departments, which included Accommodative Services, Admissions, Athletics and Intramurals, Career Services, Counseling and Advisement, Distance Learning, Financial Aid, Library, Registrar, Tutoring Center. However, in the fall of 2018, following multiple discussions among the VPAA and members of the Assessment Committee and based on guidance provided by State University of New York Office of the Provost (EVID: St-V-5.1), this practice was discontinued. Academic support and student service departments now submit annual department goals plans to the head of their divisional unit in lieu of conducting a full program review. The need to streamline the process for all academic programs undergoing self-study was echoed by the data analyst, department chairs, and program reviewer writers. The discussion about the efficacy of the program review process was extended to Academic Council, a representative body of all academic departments. Decisions aimed at streamlining the program review process, such as grouping related programs together for the purpose of review, stemmed from those committee discussions. For example, the five business programs (Accounting A.A.S., Business Administration A.A.S., Business Administration A.S., Business Administration: Sport Management A.S., and



Health Services Management A.A.S.) were grouped into a single comprehensive review, as were Environmental Science A.A.S. and Environmental Technology A.S., and Renewable Energies Technologies A.A.S. and Wind Energy and Turbine Technology A.A.S. Procedural changes implemented as a result of these recommendations are reflected in the Academic Program Review Guide, which underwent its last revision in 2019.

### **Review of General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment**

The General Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and updating the General Education Assessment Plan every three years. The committee reviews each section of the plan and updates it as needed (e.g., to align with changes in the SUNY General Education Requirement or assessment guidance, to clarify wording, or to update the timeline). The General Education Assessment Plan specifically calls for a description of how the College evaluates the general education learning outcomes assessment process. The following statement is taken from the General Education Assessment Plan: Seventh Cycle (EVID: St-V-5.2).

**8. *The assessment process includes provisions for evaluating the assessment process itself and disseminating assessment results to the appropriate campus community.***

*In addition to sharing assessment results with faculty involved in that year's assessment for their own interpretation, reflection, and planning, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator will solicit input from faculty via the general education assessment survey regarding the assessment process. Based on recommendations from faculty involved in the assessments and from wider discussions in Faculty Council, the plan may be amended by the General Education Committee and resubmitted for approval by Faculty Council. At the end of each three-year cycle, the review and approval process is repeated.*

An example of a recent improvement to the general education assessment process was streamlining the follow-up assessment survey. The survey was made into a fillable form with drop-down menus to make it easier for assessors to complete. Also, some questions were omitted or re-worded to eliminate redundancies (EVID: St-V-5.3).

### **Review of Program Learning Outcomes Assessment**

Program learning outcomes assessment is an organic process that is continually evolving to improve efficiency, usefulness, and sustainability. Without the resources to purchase outcomes assessment software, such as Canvas, the College embraces a homegrown approach to outcomes assessment, with faculty involved in every phase including development, implementation, collection, reflection, and action. Changes to program learning outcomes assessment have largely been the result of faculty feedback, additional training in learning outcomes assessment, and a study of best practices. Several changes have been made over time to the Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan template to make it more user-friendly.

### **Review of Course Evaluation Assessment Process**

The student course evaluation process is reviewed periodically by Academic Council and changes are approved by that body (EVID: St-V-5.4). Some examples of changes made to the process include developing a single evaluation instrument to be used for both full-time and part-time faculty members, revising the survey questions to provide data that are more useful for making improvements, updating the technology used to compile the results, and exploring options regarding the most efficient mode of distribution (i.e., online versus paper-and-pencil).

### **Conclusion**






















































The faculty-driven academic assessment processes in place at Clinton Community College have contributed to an inclusive culture of educational effectiveness. The research conducted to support this self-study has found that these processes have been effective in aligning institutional and educational goals, evaluating student achievement, and making use of assessment results to improve student learning experiences. Notable is the institution's emphasis on the regular review and enhancement of both credit and non-credit programmatic

offerings to ensure that all Clinton Community College students are receiving a quality educational experience. Additionally, transparency and accessibility of assessment results have improved in the past few years as a result of the reorganization of document storage capabilities and an upgraded website. Although assessment processes are well established and data are valued by the campus, dwindling human resources have impacted the ability to efficiently conduct some aspects of academic assessment. To maintain a high standard of educational effectiveness, several opportunities for improvement were identified to increase the consistency and sustainability of carrying out assessment and to facilitate the accessibility of assessment data.

## Opportunities for Innovation and Improvement

- Fill the vacancy in the Institutional Research and Planning Office.
- Store all institutional assessment information internally in one easily accessible location.
- Clearly and regularly publish assessment deadlines and dates.
- Streamline the learning outcomes assessment processes.
- Increase clerical assistance available for assessment.
- Develop a system for tracking student success in obtaining employment after graduation.

## Standard V Supporting Documents

 St-V-1.1 Examples--Academic Affairs Assessment Plans	 St-V-2.23 Classroom Observation Report
 St-V-1.2 Example--CIS Degree Program Webpage	 St-V-2.24 CAP Admin and Instructor Handbook 2019-2020 (pp.12-13)
 St-V-1.3 Institutional Learning Outcomes	 St-V-2.25 Example--CAP Instructor Site Visitation Schedule_Math
 St-V-1.4 Example--Curriculum Map Course-to-ILO AA English (p.6)	 St-V-2.26 Examples--Institutional Assessment Documents in Information Repository
 St-V-2.1 PLACEHOLDER Institutional Effectiveness Plan 2021	 St-V-2.27 PLACEHOLDER Institutional Effectiveness SharePoint Site
 St-V-2.2 Examples--Academic Department Goals Assessment Plans 2019-20	 St-V-2.28 PLACEHOLDER Student Consumer Information Webpage
 St-V-2.3 Assessment Committee Charge Faculty Council Bylaws (p.6)	 St-V-2.29 College Navigator Webpage-Clinton Community College
 St-V-2.4 Five-Year Assessment Cycle for Academic Program Reviews	 St-V-2.30 SUNY Graduates' Wages Webpage
 St-V-2.5 Academic Program Review Guide	 St-V-2.31 Academic Assessment Cycle
 St-V-2.6 Example--Program Review MathSci AS 2017-18	 St-V-3.1 Strategic Planning Procedure Manual 2020-2025 (pp.5-8)
 St-V-2.7 Example--External Team Report Accounting AAS 2014-15	 St-V-3.2 Student Opinion Survey of Course-Related Instruction
 St-V-2.8 Example--Program Review Progress Report CJ 2014-15	 St-V-3.3 Examples of Improvements to Course Content, Activities, Delivery, and Pacing
 St-V-2.9 PLACEHOLDER Program Learning Outcomes Webpage	 St-V-3.4 Examples of Improvements to Quality and Accessibility of Resources
 St-V-2.10 Template--Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan	 St-V-3.5 Examples of Improvements to Validity and Reliability of Assessment Instruments
 St-V-2.11 Example--Completed PLO Assessment Plan Bus Admin AS 2016-19	 St-V-3.6 Examples of Improvements to Student Readiness Measures
 St-V-2.12 General Education Assessment Plan Seventh Cycle 2020-23	 St-V-3.7 Proposal--Basic Comm Req AA_AS Programs
 St-V-2.13 PLACEHOLDER General Education Assessment Webpage	 St-V-3.8 Examples of Improvements to Degree Program Curricula
 St-V-2.14 PLACEHOLDER General Education Assessment Handbook	 St-V-3.9 Examples of Improvements to Program Assessment Measures
 St-V-2.15 CAP Instructor and Administrator Handbook 2019-2020 (p.17)	 St-V-3.10 Tutoring Center Workshop Data and STEM Usage Data 2015-2020
 St-V-2.16 Examples--General Education Assessment Planning Grids	 St-V-3.11 Examples of Data Informing the Student Placement Process
 St-V-2.17 Examples--General Education Assessment Results Grids	 St-V-3.12 LRC Remote Learning Survey and Recommendations
 St-V-2.18 Examples--General Education Assessment Survey Responses	 St-V-4.1 Third Party Community Workforce Development Offerings
 St-V-2.19 Examples--General Education Annual Reports	 St-V-4.2 CCWD Course Instructor Evaluation Forms_General Training and IDP
 St-V-2.20 Faculty Eval Procedures Faculty Assn Contract 2014-2017 (Article XII B)	 St-V-5.1 SUNY Assessment Memo To Presidents-Vol-10-No-2_20100715
 St-V-2.21 Student Course Opinion Survey	 St-V-5.2 General Education Assessment Plan Seventh Cycle 2020-23 (p.6)
 St-V-2.22 Student Course Opinion Survey Cover Sheet	 St-V-5.3 Template--General Education Assessment Survey
	 St-V-5.4 Faculty Eval Procedures Faculty Assn Contract 2014-2017 (Article XII B)

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



DRAFT

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

"The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges." (Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards for Accreditation, Standard VI).

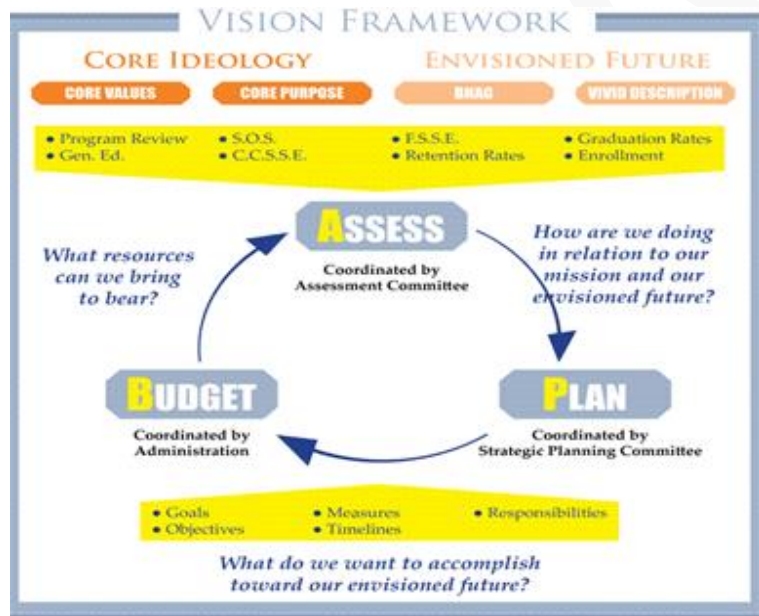
### Overview

Clinton Community College has been successfully managing its planning and resource allocation processes in alignment with its mission, vision, and core values. Facing the challenges of declining enrollment, limited state funding, and a national pandemic, the College has responded in a meaningful, reflective, and positive manner while sustaining its focus on its institutional goals. Inclusive processes, engagement of stakeholders, and continuous assessment and improvement of programs demonstrate Clinton Community College's commitment to the students and community it serves.

### Planning and Improvement Processes

Clinton Community College is committed to a culture of planning and assessment. The Assess, Plan, Budget Model (APB) demonstrates how strategic priorities are reflected within decision making at all levels and during annual discussions of resource allocations within the College (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Assess, Plan, Budget Model



### Strategic Planning

The [strategic plan](#) guides the College in fulfilling its mission with a focus on its institutional priorities. Resource planning and improvement processes employed at the College are aligned to the strategic goal to "Build and maintain effective and efficient operational systems with strategically guided resource allocation and data-informed decision making." (EVID: St-VI-2.1) In accordance with the strategic plan, the Strategic Planning Committee reviews proposals for initiatives that directly align with operational and strategic priorities which may require substantial College resources. The Committee provides recommendations for endorsed initiatives to the President's Cabinet, which then approves or disapproves these recommendations. The Strategic Planning



Committee also reviews major grant-funding opportunities such as the Perkins Grant and the Moore Academic Innovation Fund, which is administered by the College Foundation (EVID: St-VI-2.2).

Strategic initiatives are further reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee for alignment with grant opportunities and, if endorsed, are included within the budgetary process. Department budgets are reviewed to determine levels of required funding and any additional funding requests. Based on strategic initiatives, any funding determined to be non-essential within department budgets may be reduced and those funds transferred to the department sponsoring the initiative.

### **Administrative Planning and Assessment**

As specified by the [Institutional Effectiveness Plan](#) (IEP), Administrative assessment plans are developed within the six major divisions of campus operations: Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Finance, Human Resources, Institutional Advancement, and Student Affairs. Division leaders, in collaboration with their respective department members, identify measurable objectives, which are aligned to the Middle States Standards for Accreditation and the College strategic goals. For each objective an associated task, measurement, and target date is established (EVID: St-VI-1.1). Members of the President's Cabinet provide the President with regular updates on progress being made in their respective divisions toward meeting their identified goals. These updates provide evidence of how each division is contributing to the achievement of the strategic goals. This information is included in the administrative reports that are shared at monthly meetings of the Board of Trustees (EVID: St-VI-1.2). In the spring semester, the Finance division presents a more detailed report on the financial state of the College to the Board of Trustees (EVID: St-VI-1.3).

At the end of the academic year, each division reviews its assessment plan and documents the status of task completion. A presentation of divisional highlights and accomplishments from the year is presented to the Board of Trustees. In the summers of 2017-2019, the Board held an annual retreat at which they discussed growth opportunities for the College based on institutional priorities, results from administrative and academic assessment processes, and community needs (EVID: St-VI-2.3). Administrative reports to the Board of Trustees and completed division assessment plans are accessible to the campus via the SharePoint Information Repository.

The Institutional Effectiveness Plan is reviewed and updated periodically to provide current data for planning and budgeting purposes. The comprehensive review of the IEP also provides an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the College's planning and resource allocation processes (EVID: St-VI-9.1).

### **Financial Planning and Budgeting Processes**

In accordance with the Policies and Procedure Manual, "The fiscal policies and management of the College are in accordance with applicable New York State and federal laws, and with the laws and regulations prescribed by the State University Trustees and promulgated by the Clinton Community Board of Trustees. The College's Chief Fiscal Officer, The Vice President for Administration/Business Affairs and/or Controller, administer these." (EVID: St-VI-5.1) The Board of Trustees is responsible for approving the budget, establishing tuition and fees, and approving temporary and permanent facilities (EVID: St-VI-5.2). The Office of Vice President for Administration and Finance, currently filled by the Controller, is responsible for overseeing the purchase of all materials, equipment, and supplies (St-VI-5.3). A Purchasing and Accounts Payable Policy and Procedure Manual and requisite forms are available in the Information Repository (EVID: St-VI-5.4).

Clinton Community College utilizes a zero-based budgeting approach, which helps align the College's spending with its strategic goals (EVID: St-VI-3.1). This approach helps to verify that all components of the annual budget are cost-effective and relevant. The College begins work on the subsequent year budget early in the spring semester (EVID: St-VI-3.2). A series of meetings is held to discuss the current year budget, make projections through the end of the fiscal year, and start gathering information for the preparation of the new budget.



Members of the President's Cabinet meet with their departments to discuss the resources needed to achieve their goals, and they use this information to assist in making budgeting decisions that will meet the needs of their areas and the students they serve. To help achieve financial sustainability, which is an identified institutional priority, all expenditures must be justified within the framework of the strategic plan. The President and Controller meet with cabinet members to discuss divisional budgets which are reviewed within the context of actual enrollment, enrollment projections, collected and anticipated tuition revenues, and spending patterns to determine if any modifications to the financial plan need to be made.

The President approves the draft budget which is then submitted to the finance committee of the Board of Trustees in May or June for review and discussion. The Board of Trustees considers the budget in June, and upon approval it is forwarded to the Clinton County Legislature (County Sponsor) in July (EVID: St-VI-3.3). After receiving County legislative approval, the budget is sent to SUNY System Administration for final approval in August.

Due to the lack of discretionary funds available in recent years, a situation which was intensified by the pandemic, an austerity budgeting process has been followed to help increase the financial stability of the College. As a result, some budgeting processes were consolidated since most non-essential funding was suspended. It is anticipated that the College will return to its full budgeting process in 2021-2022.

### **Planning for Facilities, Infrastructure, and Technology**

Clinton Community College has placed significant attention in recent years on physical improvements in facilities and technology enhancements. The College and its Building and Grounds Department strive to provide a campus that is well maintained and free from risk. In doing so, they focus much of their energy on maintaining the historic nature of the campus in an environmentally sound manner. In light of this priority, the Facilities Master Plan Tune-Up was completed in 2011 by JMZ Architects and Planners, P.C. under direction of the Board of Trustees (EVID: St-VI-6.1). The Board of Trustees of Clinton Community College has always placed a special emphasis on the stewardship of this historically significant site and its buildings.

Clinton Community College has undertaken several capital projects in recent years to improve the services and infrastructure of the College. The Institute for Advanced Manufacturing (\$13M), a state-of-the-art facility designed and equipped to serve as a regional hub for manufacturing education, was opened in the fall of 2017. This building provides a safe environment for students to gain hands-on experience (EVID: St-VI-4.1). The Learning Commons Project (\$4.5M), featuring student support and academic services, opened in 2018. The Learning Commons, which houses the Douglas Library, Tutoring Center, and Office of Accommodative Services, provides enhanced study space for students and is centrally located in the Moore Building for student convenience. The Moore Renovation Project (\$10.5M), slated to be completed by Fall 2021, will provide students, faculty, and staff a climate-friendly learning and working environment. The project includes window and exterior door replacement, a new exterior insulated finish, air conditioning, and front and back veranda reconstruction. This project is expected to provide the College with a 30% savings in heating costs. Another major project completed by the College was the Stafford Mechanical Equipment Replacement Project, which resulted in a complete upgrade to the air conditioning system in the Stafford building. The operation consisted of removing the old cooling tower and replacing it with a more efficient chiller unit. This project was given high priority as it was a health and safety issue; research has linked Legionnaires' disease to the cooling tower that was being replaced.

The Building and Grounds Department has been resourceful in maintaining the safety and beauty of the campus within a limited budget. For example, in 2018 and 2019, Clinton Community College partnered with the Clinton County Highway Department to provide patchwork on the campus roadways and parking lots. The projected cost for the repairs was \$30,000. The Buildings and Grounds Department provided the site prep work at a cost of \$7,000, which resulted in a savings of \$23,000 for the College.

The College has completed and continues to work on several technology upgrades and improvements. The Technology Plan 2015-2020 summarizes the current state of the campus technology, identifies and prioritizes technology initiatives, determines resources required, and establishes a timeline to address each initiative (EVID: St-VI-6.2). Prioritization of initiatives was based on alignment to the College mission and consideration of potential disruption of College services. Implementation of the technology plan resulted in the installation of over 40 new computer terminals as part of the Learning Commons renovation to better meet the educational needs of the students. In addition, SharePoint was added as a tool for departments to share information more readily, thus leading to streamlined operation and improved efficiency. In an effort to enhance data security, the College entered into a contract with SUNY for the KnowBe4 program, which provides data security training for all College employees, thereby minimizing external threats from infecting the College's computer network. One of the most important goals emerging from the Information Technology plan was the launch of a [new website](#) for the College. An improved presence with user-friendly links to pertinent information for current students, potential students, and community members creates an atmosphere of openness and welcoming to the College. The Learning Resources Committee, a standing committee of the Faculty Council, is responsible for reviewing policies, available materials, and new technologies, and making recommendations for improvement and awareness of resources (EVID: St-VI-9.2).

### **Academic Planning and Scheduling**

An essential component of academic planning is the formal review of every academic program on a five-year basis. The defining purpose for conducting these reviews is to assure program relevancy, integrity, and excellence; however, these reviews may also have budgetary ramifications. Recommendations emerging from the program review process are vetted by the relevant departments and the VPAA to determine their feasibility and any potential budgetary implications.

The Academic Council, as a representative inclusive body, has a significant role in academic planning. The Council engages in planning initiatives within the framework of the institutional priorities and presents supported initiatives to the entire faculty body at meetings of the Faculty Council.

Department chairs use the student information management system to create an occupancy rate report for courses offered in their areas and review the transcripts of all students enrolled in programs associated with their department. This provides the necessary information for determining the appropriate number of sections which need to be offered, thereby resulting in an efficient schedule (EVID: St-VI-8.1). For example, as a result of this data informed planning, the number of credits offered in Business/Accounting programs was reduced by 31.6% from Fall 2018 to Fall 2019 and by 33.3% from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020, for a two-year reduction of 54.4%. Likewise, the same planning approach resulted in a 33.3% reduction from Spring 2019 to Spring 2021. The reductions in course offerings coincided with the drop in overall enrollment, but the percent of students in the Business/Accounting programs stayed relatively the same as a percent of the College's overall student population.

The VPAA and department chairs work together when making decisions about low enrolled courses. A key factor in making the decision to cancel a course is the potential impact on the students' timely completion of program requirements. Though the cost savings of dropping a low enrolled course might be to the College's benefit, the impact on the student is at the forefront of any decision made. Directed studies, course substitutions, and cross registration with another institution are given consideration as options for students to meet their degree requirements.

An innovative and cost-effective way of delivering coursework that benefit students is by offering courses in a flex mode. At Clinton Community College, a flex course is one that can be taken completely in-person, completely online, or any combination that works best for the student. This flexibility gives students the option to enroll in courses that best meets their learning style and personal situations. The utilization of flex courses provides the College a viable option for reducing instructional costs. Two low enrolled sections of the same

course can be combined into one section with flexible format and resultant higher enrollment. Every student is learning in the modality that best suits their needs while the College saves on costs by running one section rather than two.

Another student-centered initiative which has played a role in course planning and scheduling processes is the use of Open Education Resources (OER). Courses that are offered using Open Educational Resources are labeled in the online course schedule using an "OER" icon, so they are easily discernible. Students can also use a query to search exclusively for OER courses. It is anticipated that these open teaching and learning materials, which can be freely used and shared at minimal cost (\$10) to students, will lead to greater levels of student retention and success. In addition to individual courses being offered using Open Education Resources, the entire Health Services Management program is offered online using OER. The training and course development costs associated with this program were completely funded by the Achieving the Dream Grant provided by the Gates Foundation. The Health Services Management degree attracted seven students when first implemented in Fall 2017 and currently has 18 students enrolled. This program meets a need in the community while providing options for students who are considering a career in the medical field.

### **Workforce Planning and Analysis**

The Institute for Advanced Manufacturing (IAM) provides potential transformational change by expanding workforce capacity through educational and workforce training. The Institute supports workforce and economic development by expanding educational opportunities, meeting immediate workforce development demands of local businesses and industries, and contributing to the development of a highly skilled workforce. The College offers traditional certificate and degree pathways, as well as non-credit trainings and industry certifications. The Institute has the capacity to leverage its facility, equipment, and knowledge base to generate diverse funding streams outside of traditional educational revenue generating models (EVID: St-VI-6.3).

The purpose of the Center for Community and Workforce Development (CCWD) is to support the College mission by helping county residents enhance their education, improve their employability and quality of life, or simply to study for the enjoyment of learning something new. The CCWD provides non-credit training in three primary areas: community programming, professional credentials, and technical training.

Prior to the onset of the pandemic, 1100-1600 Clinton County residents participated in CCWD programs each year. About 6-10 Clinton County business utilize CCWD for training programs each year. Despite the interruption by the pandemic, over 600 county residents enrolled in a CCWD course in 2020. A week prior to the pandemic-caused shutdown, a new hybrid training program, Essentials for Advanced Manufacturing, was launched but had to be suspended until the hands-on component could be delivered in person at the Institute for Advanced Manufacturing. [Plans are underway to offer Essentials for Advanced Manufacturing in 2021-2022.](#)

In Fall 2021, the College implemented the conversion of its Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training to college credit-bearing status. This provides students a new pathway into certificate or degree programs. As a result of this change, students enrolled in the EMT training program are included in the full-time equivalent (FTE) calculation, thereby providing financial benefit to the College through increased revenue.

### **Fiscal Status and Institutional Responses**

#### **College Revenue Sources**

Clinton Community College is committed to maintaining financial stability and has financial resources adequate to support its basic operations, educational purpose, and core programming. Funding for community colleges traditionally consists of one-third funding each from county sponsorship, state aid, and tuition. The College continues to receive outstanding support from its sponsor, Clinton County, which has increased its financial investment by 20% since 2016 and its share of the operating budget from 20% in 2015-16 to 34% for the fiscal year 2020-21 (Table 11).

**Table 11: County Sponsor Financial Contribution History**

Fiscal Years	Budgeted Net Operating Costs	County Sponsor Contribution	County Sponsor as % of Net Operating Costs	\$ Increase	% Increase
2010-2011	15,238,864	2,351,040	15%		
2011-2012	15,162,839	2,376,040	16%	25,000	1.1%
2012-2013	14,938,532	2,465,040	17%	89,000	3.7%
2013-2014	14,645,138	2,554,828	17%	89,788	3.6%
2014-2015	14,142,587	2,644,247	19%	89,419	3.5%
2015-2016	13,779,473	2,697,131	20%	52,884	2.0%
2016-2017	13,710,722	2,697,132	20%	1	0.0%
2017-2018	13,086,375	2,872,132	22%	175,000	6.5%
2018-2019	12,527,101	2,955,934	24%	83,802	2.9%
2019-2020	11,503,987	3,251,527	28%	295,593	10.0%
2020-2021	9,700,000	3,251,527	34%	-	0.0%
<b>Increase from 2016-17 to 2019-20 funding</b>				<b>\$554,395</b>	<b>21%</b>

Source: CCC Controller's Office

State funding has been declining and constitutes only 24% of the current operating budget. There has been a decline in State support of over \$1.6 million, or nearly 50%, from academic year 2013-2014 to that projected for 2020-2021 (Table 12). State funding is determined by an enrollment formula which includes only credit bearing coursework. Community demand for non-credit bearing workforce development programming has increased; however, the funding formulas do not consider enrollments in this area. With the budget allocation from the State being enrollment driven, there is added pressure on the College to address the declining enrollment in order to remain fiscally sound. This has required the College to be more constrained with spending while emphasizing the need to stabilize and increase enrollment.

**Table 12: State Financial Support History**

State Support History					
Fiscal Years	Net Operating Costs	State Support	State as a % of Net Operating Costs	\$ Increase	% Increase
2010-2011	15,238,864	3,682,698	24%		
2011-2012	15,162,839	3,669,358	24%	(13,340)	-0.4%
2012-2013	14,938,532	3,828,815	26%	159,457	4.3%
2013-2014	14,645,138	3,993,967	27%	165,152	4.3%
2014-2015	14,142,587	3,792,280	27%	(201,687)	-5.0%
2015-2016	13,779,473	3,599,574	26%	(192,706)	-5.1%
2016-2017	13,710,722	3,372,426	25%	(227,148)	-6.3%
2017-2018	13,086,375	3,094,615	24%	(277,811)	-8.2%
2018-2019	12,527,101	2,932,731	23%	(161,884)	-5.2%
2019-2020	11,503,987	2,851,363	25%	(81,368)	-2.8%
2020-2021	9,700,000	2,346,836	24%	(504,527)	-17.7%
<b>Decrease from 2013-14 funding to projected 2020-21 funding</b>				<b>(\$1,647,131)</b>	<b>-49%</b>

Source: CCC Controller's Office

Student tuition is the third key revenue component of the College budget. Student enrollment peaked at over 1600 FTEs in 2010-11. This spike in enrollment was due in large part to a significant number of displaced employees from companies like Pfizer who came to the College to pursue pathways to other careers. With the end of the incentives for retraining displaced workers and the decline in the high school student population in the region, there has been a concomitant decrease in FTEs since the 2010-2011 enrollment peak.

During the period of the College's highest enrollments (2010-2012), the College amassed a deficit of over \$1.6 million. In total the College sustained \$3.3 million in cumulative deficits from 2010 to 2018. Starting in 2017,

under the President's leadership, an array of well-informed decisions resulted in a two-year cumulative surplus of \$677,848 for fiscal years 2019 through 2020, with an annual projected surplus of \$369,000 for 2021. A closer look reveals that even though there was a 23% drop in FTEs from 2016 to 2020 resulting in a \$2.7 million decrease in revenue, there was an even greater reduction in costs of \$4.01 million during the same period (Table 13).

**Table 13: Financial Summary Detail**

Fiscal Year	Operating Expenses		Total Revenues		Profit & Loss		Salaries and Benefits		FTEs	
	\$	% of 2011	\$	% of 2011	Annual Surplus/ (Deficit)	Cumulative Surplus/ (Deficit)	\$	% of 2011	#	% of 2011
2010-11	\$15,238,864	100%	14,572,108	100%	\$(666,756)	\$(666,756)	\$12,494,386	100%	1,625	100%
2011-12	\$15,162,839	100%	14,193,106	97%	\$(969,733)	\$(1,636,489)	\$12,995,574	104%	1,567	96%
2012-13	\$14,938,532	98%	14,769,062	101%	\$(169,470)	\$(1,805,959)	\$12,959,054	104%	1,482	91%
2013-14	\$14,645,138	96%	14,709,799	101%	\$64,661	\$(1,741,298)	\$12,514,358	100%	1,299	80%
2014-15	\$14,142,587	93%	14,054,000	96%	\$(88,587)	\$(1,829,885)	\$12,167,227	97%	1,189	73%
2015-16	\$13,779,473	90%	13,747,385	94%	\$(32,088)	\$(1,861,973)	\$11,558,074	93%	1,098	68%
2016-17	\$13,710,722	90%	12,771,668	88%	\$(939,054)	\$(2,801,027)	\$11,501,841	92%	954	59%
2017-18	\$13,086,375	86%	12,599,152	86%	\$(487,223)	\$(3,288,250)	\$11,149,401	89%	890	55%
2018-19	\$12,527,101	82%	12,577,686	86%	\$50,585	\$(3,237,665)	\$10,749,229	86%	798	49%
2019-20	\$11,503,987	75%	12,131,250	83%	\$627,263	\$(2,610,402)	\$9,999,055	80%	728	45%
2020-21 Fcst	\$9,700,000	64%	10,069,190	69%	\$369,190	\$(2,241,212)	\$8,300,000	66%	591	36%

Source: CCC Controller's Office

While FTEs have dropped 55% from 2010-2011 to 2019-2020, changes in tuition rates have increased student revenue per credit by 39%. This stabilized student revenues in 2019-2020 at \$4.5 million even with a near 9% drop in FTEs from the previous year (EVID: St-VI-8.2). Other sources have helped to offset the drop in student tuition revenues over the past decade. Laboratory and technology fees totaled \$534,000 in 2019-2020, and alternative revenue sources, including grants, property rental, contract courses, and Foundation support, have grown by \$200,000, or 26%, since 2011.

Due to the pandemic, the College received some financial relief provided through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF). The College was awarded \$2,989,694 in institutional funding of which the College has drawn down \$1,540,000 as of July 2021. These funds have been used to cover costs of cleaning supplies and equipment and technology for remote learning and conferencing. The institutional funds have also been applied to tuition revenue offsets. In addition to the institutional funding, the College has received \$2.14 million of HEERF support for student emergency grants. Funding provided through student grants was used for identified needs associated with cost of attendance such as technology (e.g., Wi-Fi, laptop, printer), transportation, dependent care, utilities, and tuition.

### College Foundation Support

The College Foundation was gifted approximately two million dollars of unrestricted funds by the George Moore Foundation. The Foundation has contributed funding for 1.5 staff persons, scholarships for students, and operational support in the amount of \$500,000 for 2019-2020 and \$100,000 for the subsequent three years (EVID: St-VI-4.2). Additionally, the Foundation raised \$1.5 million in support of the 2018 Learning Commons Project and has supported innovative program initiatives designed to increase student retention and develop programming within the Institute of Advanced Manufacturing. Some examples include the implementation of K-12 STEM programming, development of a mobile technology classroom, and upgrades to program equipment.



### **Continuing Cost Saving Efforts**

The College has taken significant steps to reduce the cost of operation. The President and Controller review vendor contracts concerning all operations of the College including telecom, maintenance, security, and insurance. Contracts are evaluated using a cost benefit approach with input provided by all impacted departments. Payment terms related to contracts have been adjusted to align better with the College's cash flow timeline. The renegotiation of contracts, together with lower energy costs and closure of the dormitories have collectively decreased non-personnel operating costs by over \$800,000, or more than 35%, since 2016.

There have been several key operational changes which have resulted in cost and time savings for the College. The introduction of online registration in Spring 2013 increased registration efficiency for the students and productivity of the Registrar's Office. Subsequently, the College adopted online bill pay as an option for students. In April 2020, the College switched from paper to online posting of employee payroll statements utilizing the Greenshades software system. This change resulted in savings on supplies (paper, envelopes, postage) and more efficient use of staff time. The fraud protection service, Positive Pay, has protected the College from theft by fraudulent checks.

The Faculty Student Association (FSA) was once a financially stable organization that provided valuable services and resources to the College and its students. Unfortunately, the FSA was greatly impacted by shrinking enrollment and ill-advised contracts, which negatively impacted FSA finances. The FSA has taken several steps to correct its financial position and alleviate its unintended negative impact on the College. In the Fall of 2018, FSA sold the College residence halls and thus eliminated a significant debt and returned funds previously borrowed from the College. At this same time, the FSA and its food service provider mutually agreed to terminate service. The FSA subsequently entered a new contract with a local vendor which, until the onset of the pandemic, provided food service at the College. This vendor rented the kitchen from the College and paid a percentage on sales after specific performance marks were met. Finally, in the summer of 2020, the FSA exited its contract with its bookstore provider and entered a contract with a new online provider which pays the College commission on sales, without any cost to either the College or the FSA (EVID: St-VI-8.3).

The College has also focused its efforts on reducing costs in the area of personnel. In 2019, a voluntary incentivized retirement program was introduced. This initiative will result in a projected \$1.8 million, or 18%, savings in pay and benefits in 2020-21 relative to 2019-2020. Due to further retirements, an additional savings of \$643,000 will be realized as the College moves into 2021-2022.

The College has been able to help alleviate the stress and burden placed on its reduced staff by outsourcing some services. A notable example is the established contract with Behavioral Health Services North (BHSN) for mental health counseling to assist the College Academic Advising and Student Support Office, which had a recent staff reduction from three full-time counselors to one. With the departure of the Career Services Coordinator, the College contracted with ETS staffing agency to provide resume writing and employment search services to students. Both of these contractual initiatives are at no cost to the College. Although positive steps have been taken to address thinly staffed areas of the College, the existing high number of vacancies is creating difficulties in sustaining key functionalities. Through the application of the strategic planning processes, the College needs to identify vacancies that must be filled to adequately support College operations. As a first step, the Strategic Planning Committee recommended that the Associate Dean of Institutional Research and Planning position should be filled, and a search has commenced with a goal of filling the position for the start of the 2021-2022 academic year.

### **Auditors Interpretation of Financial Viability**

Clinton Community College engages an independent external auditor, Boulrice & Woods CPAS, P.C., on an annual basis (EVID: St-VI-7.1). The College readies its system for audit as of the last day of the fiscal year, August

31. The year-end steps include extricating reports from the enterprise resource planning software package, Microsoft Dynamics Great Plains. These reports include cash disbursements/receipts, journal entries, payroll registers, trial balances, and full summary and detailed general ledger accounts. Schedules and statements are prepared for student financial aid, revenue and expense activity, grants, and capital projects. This process begins with documents being transmitted electronically to the auditors in September and October, in preparation for their visit to campus in November or December.

Auditors complete a preliminary version of the audit early in the next calendar year. A management letter is submitted to the College when the audit is completed (EVID: St-VI-7.2). The Controller addresses any discrepancies or concerns in the management letter and provides a response to it. The final audit is printed and presented to the Board of Trustees. After acceptance by the Board, the audit, report, and management letter are sent to SUNY and the U.S. Department of Education, as well as other interested parties.

In recent audits, the auditors were pleased to report that there were no disagreements with management's financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matters during the audit process. Auditors encountered no difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing the audit and were appreciative of the Controller and staff for their efforts in preparing financial records for the audit and assisting in providing information and answering questions when completing their fieldwork.

## **Conclusion**

























Clinton Community College is financially stable and has adequate financial resources to support its basic operations, educational purposes, and core programming. The College enjoys outstanding support from its sponsoring county, which among other factors has helped to counter declining support from the State and reduced tuition revenue. The College has received more than \$41 million of supplemental funding from the County and State to secure infrastructure upgrades to enable the continued development of the College as an important community resource. Despite a number of leadership challenges prior to 2017, institutional priorities have consistently driven decision-making at the College with the guidance of the Strategic Planning Committee. The College's administration, faculty, and staff engage in planning aligned to strategic goals at both the institutional and unit level. Decision making occurs at multiple levels within the organization and is well integrated within shared governance processes.

Clinton Community College demonstrates strong support for institutional planning processes, both academic and administrative. However, the existing vacancy in the Office of Institutional Research and Planning is hindering access to and analysis of institutional data necessary for effective assessment and planning.

## **Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation**

- Identify, prioritize, and fill key vacancies through the application of the strategic planning processes.
- Diversify and strengthen revenue streams to enhance the financial condition of the College.
- Utilize findings of the Enrollment Management Report to reverse the trend of declining enrollment.
- Create a budget advisory subcommittee in the Strategic Planning Committee to review revenue source allocations and to make recommendations on resource utilization.

## Standard VI Supporting Documents

-  St-VI-1.1 Division Administrative Assessment Plan Template
-  St-VI-1.2 Example--Administrative Reports to BOT 5.25.2021
-  St-VI-1.3 Example--Finance Presentation to the Board March 2021
-  St-VI-2.1 CCC Strategic Plan 2020-2025 (p.8)
-  St-VI-2.2 Strategic Planning Procedure Manual 2020-2025 (pp.3-4)
-  St-VI-2.3 CCC Retreat Presentation 2019
-  St-VI-3.1 Budget Memo for FY 2019-2020
-  St-VI-3.2 Budget Timeline
-  St-VI-3.3 County Budget Presentation 2021-2022
-  St-VI-4.1 Institute for Advanced Manufacturing Webpage
-  St-VI-4.2 Non-Student Revenue per credit v FTE Report
-  St-VI-5.1 CCC Policies and Procedures (Sect 0501)
-  St-VI-5.2 Board of Trustees Bylaws (Sect 5)
-  St-VI-5.3 CCC Policies and Procedures (Sect 0503-0504)
-  St-VI-5.4 Purchasing Accounts Payable Policy Procedure
-  St-VI-6.1 Facilities Master Plan Tune-up
-  St-VI-6.2 Technology Plan 2015-2020
-  St-VI-6.3 IAM Strategic Plan
-  St-VI-7.1 Audited Financials 2019-2020
-  St-VI-7.2 Management Letter 2020
-  St-VI-8.1 Course Offering Counts with Occupancy Rate SP21
-  St-VI-8.2 Revenue per credit v FTE Report
-  St-VI-8.3 FSA Final Financial Statement 2019-2020
-  St-VI-9.2 Faculty Council Bylaws (Article VII.D.6)

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



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

*“The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.”* (Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards for Accreditation, Standard VII)

### **Overview**

The governance structure of Clinton Community College operates within the context of the State University of New York system and in alignment with the College mission and strategic goals. The roles of the Board of Trustees, the President, President’s Cabinet, administrative units, and College committees are clearly defined, and the hierarchical relationships between these entities are documented. Processes for assessing the effectiveness of institutional leadership and governance exist, and assessment results are used to inform opportunities for improvement.

### **Leadership and Governance Organizational Structure**

#### **SUNY System**

The State University of New York leadership team, composed of the SUNY Board of Trustees, Chancellor, and System Administration senior staff, coordinates the operation of the state’s thirty locally sponsored community colleges. The governance of community colleges under the SUNY System is divided between the State University and the Board of Trustees of each college. New York Education Law Article 126 provides for the establishment, financing, and administration of each community college (EVID: St-VII-1.1).

The State University is authorized to promulgate codes and regulations to standardize certain operational and academic aspects of all the community colleges. The State University Board of Trustees is authorized to provide standards for the organization and operation of community college programs, minimum and maximum standards for curricula, qualitative and quantitative standards for capital facilities, standard administrative procedures (e.g., budget formats, disbursement schedules, systems of accounts), financing arrangements, State financial assistance, tuition and fees regulations and other matters relating to the operation of the community colleges (Ed.L. §§355(1)(c); 6304(1)(b)(iv)) (EVID: St-VII-2.1; EVID: St-VII-2.2). The State University Board approves the appointment of the president of each community college by its local Board of Trustees (Ed.L. §355(1)(e)). Each community college must develop its curricula with the assistance and guidance, and subject to the approval, of the State University Board (Ed.L. §6303(4)) (EVID: St-VII-2.3). With respect to each community college, the State University Board approves the operating budget, tuition, and fees (8 NYCRR §§602.3 and 6.02(10)(e); Ed.L. §6305(8)) (EVID: St-VII-2.4; EVID: St-VII-2.5).

Clinton Community College’s administrative and governance structure is reflected in its organizational charts, which clearly illustrate the structure and reporting relationships of all College positions. These charts are updated and are made available to College employees via the Information Repository (EVID: St-VII-1.2).

#### **Board of Trustees**

Authority for the day-to-day administration of Clinton Community College is vested by statute in its Board of Trustees. The Board is comprised of ten trustees: four appointed by the New York State Governor, five appointed by the Clinton County Legislature, and one elected student trustee. This composition and process is set by New York State Education Law (§604) (EVID: St-VII-2.6). The College President reports to the Board but does not serve as chair of the Board.



The Board of Trustees meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month, with additional meetings scheduled as needed as stated in the Board of Trustees Bylaws. The dates and times of these meetings are posted on the College website and are announced in advance by the Board Secretary. The meetings are guided by Robert's Rules of Order.

According to the Board of Trustees bylaws, the "purpose of the Board of Trustees shall be that of establishing policy governing the College guided by the State University of New York as a unit of the University System pursuant to Article 126 of the New York State Education Law." (EVID: St-VII-2.7) The College Policies and Procedures Manual, compiled to "interpret general procedures as well as approved policies of the Board of Trustees of Clinton Community College," outlines the manner by which the Board of Trustees shares governance at the College (EVID: St-VII-2.8).

The Board of Trustees adheres to the Rules and Responsibilities set forth by SUNY (Section 604.2 of the Community College Regulations) which state that Trustees will "delegate responsibility for administration and execution of [established] policies to their employed professional administrators." The Board of Trustees appoints the President of the College, subject to approval of the State University Board, and appoints or delegates to the President the appointment of staff (Ed.L.§6306(2)). The Board then conducts an annual assessment of the President's performance including but not limited to a document of expectations and specific goals" (EVID: St-VII-2.9).

Additionally, the Board establishes policies governing the College, approves curricula, budget, tuition and fees, and awards certificates and diplomas. The Board adopts salary schedules, approves the College's mission, goals, and objectives, and assesses the College's overall performance. Board members often participate on College committees and task forces and attend graduation and awards ceremonies.

The Board adheres to a Conflict of Interest Policy (EVID: St-VII-2.10), the purpose of which is to "protect Clinton Community College's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an Officer or Trustee of Clinton Community College. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable corporations". Each new trustee is given an orientation meeting packet that provides information on the duties and responsibilities, along with applicable laws relating to their work on the Board (EVID: St-VII-2.11).

The Finance Committee, a standing committee of the Board of Trustees, has a minimum of three members from the Board as specified by the Board of Trustees Bylaws. The Committee reviews the proposed annual operations and capital expense budgets of the College and the tuition and fee schedules. The Committee periodically evaluates the financial condition of the College and makes appropriate recommendations for improvement. The annual audited report on financial conditions is reviewed with appropriate recommendations being made to the full Board and the College administration.

The Board of Trustees submits an operating budget to the Clinton County Legislature for approval. The Clinton County Legislature is responsible for approving the College's overall operating budget before it is submitted to the State University Board for approval.

## **College President, President's Cabinet, Administration of College Operations, and College Committees**

### College President

The President, as chief executive officer of the College, and all administrative leaders at the College, are subjected to a rigorous and inclusive selection process with final approval from the Board of Trustees to assure that they have appropriate skills, qualifications, and abilities to perform their respective roles and responsibilities (EVID: St-VII-3.1). Per Board policy, the College President is authorized to appoint all College

personnel in accordance with provisions indicated in all bargaining unit agreements. In addition, the President has the authority to re-appoint personnel. Should there be a situation requiring non-reappointment of a full-time College employee, the President will bring the matter to the attention of the Board prior to taking final action.

The College President ensures that the College's governance structure is reviewed annually, and institutional and departmental planning processes and timelines are adhered to, as discussed in the section on Standard VI. The President oversees the President's Cabinet and appoints members to 24 committees, which include standing committees, task forces, and ad hoc committees (EVID: St-VII-3.2).

The College President, with the support of the Board of Trustees, maintains the autonomy of the institution by advocating to the sponsor, Clinton County, on issues such as the budget and infrastructure. The Board and President present unified and consistent responses when speaking with the news media and other outside groups, as outlined in the Board of Trustees Bylaws, Section 6: Communication and Ethics (EVID: St-VII-2.12). The President reports to the Board of Trustees at each regular meeting, preparing an "agenda of items to come before the meeting ... in consultation with the Board Chairperson." (EVID: St-VII-3.3) The President also informs the Board of his activities with various stakeholders on campus and in the community.

The College President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and other administrative staff members have regular engagement with faculty, staff, and students, and employ various methods to ensure full engagement and transparency among all groups. Some examples of this engagement include opening day meetings at the beginning of each semester for all faculty and staff, at which administrators share information about the state of the College and plans for the upcoming months; periodic town hall meetings for the entire College community in order to address issues of concern, changes, and initiatives being considered; meetings with union leadership; College-wide email updates; labor management meetings; an annual President's retreat; publication of the Board summary of personnel action report, available in the Information Repository; and an open-door policy that encourages everyone to ask questions and to meet with administrators to discuss areas of concern.

#### President's Cabinet

The President's Cabinet is made up of those who report directly to the President: Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Vice President for Administration and Finance (vacant), Dean of Student Affairs, Dean of Enrollment Management, Controller, Director of Building and Grounds, Director of Information Technology (vacant), Director of Human Resources, Director of the Institute for Advanced Manufacturing (vacant), and Assistant to the President. The President chairs regularly scheduled cabinet meetings at which cabinet members share updates and advise the President. These meetings typically involve discussion of matters related to the institutional priorities, consideration of recommendations from the Strategic Planning Committee, and review of proposals for new initiatives. The Assistant to the President calls for agenda items, emails the agenda to members, and then posts minutes in the Information Repository for the benefit of the entire campus community.

#### Administration of College Operations

Since 2016, the combination of retirements and resignations has resulted in more than 50 vacant positions across all areas of the College, including administration, faculty, and staff positions. The challenging financial situation facing the College due to the pandemic and declining enrollment has prevented the College from filling most of these vacant positions. Much of the work associated with these vacant positions has been temporarily absorbed by current administrators and other employees.

#### *Academic Affairs*

Academic Affairs provides access and support to a diverse student body by offering high quality career and transfer programs along with innovative academic support and developmental education assistance. Academic Affairs promotes student success for both new and continuing students through educational and community

partnerships in conjunction with a supportive teaching and learning environment and ongoing instructional support to faculty.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs, as the College's chief academic officer, presides over ten academic departments, Distance Learning, the Douglas Library, the Center for Community and Workforce Development, the Tutoring Center, Accommodative Services, and Institutional Research and Planning. The VPAA is a member of the President's Cabinet and is the President's chief advisor for academic matters.

The Academic Council consists of the VPAA, academic department chairs, academic program coordinators, academic services representatives, the Director of Nursing, the CCWD Specialist, the Distance Learning Coordinator/Instructional Designer, the Learning Resources Specialist, librarians, Registrar, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator, and the Academic Advising and Student Support Services Coordinator. The agenda is initially set by the Vice President for Academic Affairs with additional input provided by the council. Minutes are posted in the Information Repository by the Administrative Assistant to the VPAA.

### *Student Affairs*

The Student Affairs mission is to provide a student experience that facilitates the development of Clinton Community College Students encouraging the students to create of a sense of belonging/college identity, acquire knowledge and skills, expand critical thinking skills, increase the capacity to make informed and ethical choices, and assume self-responsibility.

Student Affairs is led by the Dean of Student Affairs, who oversees the Director of Campus Life, Academic Advising and Student Support Coordinator, Director of Athletics, and College nurse. This division supports students as they transition into college and achieve their academic goals (EVID: St-VII-4.1).

### *Institutional Advancement*

The Office of Institutional Advancement includes the College Foundation and the Alumni Association (EVID: St-VII-4.2). The Foundation mission is to provide a "partnership role to CCC mission to transform the lives of faculty, staff, students, and the community through effective acquisition of extra resources." The Vice President for Institutional Advancement interacts with faculty members, department chairs, and program point persons to discuss funding for advancing programs or the development of new approaches to student scholarships.

The Foundation is also a resource that directly supports students. During the summer of 2020, this office assisted with outreach efforts that helped students who faced issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and helped refine the process students used to access needed CARES Act funding. Through the Foundation, the VPAA also supported students in financial distress by listening, encouraging, and connecting them to area agencies or student assistance funds, as needed.

Through the efforts of a 15-member Board of Directors, the College Alumni Association actively supports students, academic program areas, and alumni across the country. Alumni regularly chair fundraising campaigns, participate in graduation, recognize alums in the community, and provide students from each academic department with Outstanding Student Scholarships on an annual basis. In the last decade, alumni giving to the college has exceeded the national average for community college alumni.

### *Enrollment Management*

The Enrollment Management Office includes the offices of Admissions, Financial Aid, and Registrar, and provides services related to marketing and public relations. This office is in direct contact with students and provides support for them to be successful. Most mass communications going out to students, such as emails, texts, and letters, are written and approved by this office. The Dean of Enrollment Management is one member of the "Help" group ([help@clinton.edu](mailto:help@clinton.edu)), whose members respond to student emails regarding a variety of problems or questions.

Enrollment management activities and new initiatives and campaigns are regularly reported at cabinet meetings ensuring that information is communicated to administrators and shared with the appropriate departments, and at meetings of the Academic Council and Faculty Council. Weekly enrollment reports with updated headcounts, credits, and FTEs are shared with all academic department chairs and student services staff utilizing a comparison to the previous year's numbers. The data represent the overall enrollment totals as well as more specific student categories such as new, transfer, continuing, and concurrent enrollment.

#### *Finance*

The finance division includes the offices of Controller, Bursar, Payroll, and Purchasing. The division mission is to provide accurate and timely financial information to internal and external audiences and to analyze and provide data to support and assist other departments and administration in decision making, planning and compliance. The division is responsible for all fiscally related processes at the College. Given that the Vice President for Administration and Finance position is vacant, the Controller administers all fiscal policies of the College and ensures that they are in accordance with applicable New York State and federal laws, and with the laws and regulations prescribed by the State University Trustees (EVID: St-VII-4.3).

#### *Human Resources*

Human Resources is committed to supporting the College's overall mission and strategic goals by providing quality services and information as well as compliant solutions in a confidential, inclusive, respectful, and efficient manner. According to the Policies and Procedures Manual, the Director of Human Resources "is responsible for the overall management of the College's personnel and human resources policies and practices.... The Human Resources office assists in the development and implementation of all personnel policies and procedures, which are established as a means to carry out the management process." (EVID: St-VII-4.4)

A specific key function of this office is the coordination of searches. Clinton Community College's Recruitment and Hiring Procedure document outlines the steps to be taken when hiring for a vacancy within the College. This procedure promotes equal opportunity by selecting the best qualified individuals available to contribute towards achieving the College's mission. This guide has been developed as a resource for individuals with responsibility for recruiting, interviewing, and recommending employees for posted positions. The steps include a vacancy approval by the College President, a job announcement posting, development of a recruitment strategy, creation of a search committee, development of interview questions and matrices, review of candidates, outlined interviews protocols, making an offer to the successful candidate which includes a background check, and an onboarding process through the Human Resources Office. This process is extremely thorough and was adopted in March of 2016 and reviewed again in March of 2018.

All full-time and part-time positions (other than the position of College President) are covered by this procedure. Recruiting positions that fall within the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) bargaining unit requires extra steps that are managed by Human Resources. Emergency or unusual recruitment needs may allow a search to be exempted (waived) from this procedure with the approval of the College President. Details about qualifications for full-time faculty can be found in the section on Standard III.

#### *Information Technology*

The mission of the Information Technology Department is to empower students, staff, and faculty to develop, use, and manage information effectively by providing them with the resources, training, and data-management tools necessary to fulfill the College mission (EVID: St-VII-4.5). The IT department provides expertise and support in areas of network security, systems programming, classroom technology, and PC management. The coordination and management of these functions is provided by the Director of IT, a position which is currently vacant. The College has an Acceptable Use Policy for resources and technologies, found on the College website (EVID: St-VII-4.6).

### *Institutional Research and Planning*

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning coordinates the analysis of institutional data and is responsible for producing the Institutional Effectiveness Report. Its mission is to secure, analyze, and disseminate comprehensive data to enhance institutional decision-making, to guide and support periodic institutional assessment, and to meet required reporting standards. The office has increased the College's capacity for measuring and reporting institutional performance and serves as a resource for the oversight of all campus-wide assessment activities. The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator works closely with this office for the purpose of institutional assessment.

### College Committees

All College committees include representatives of faculty, staff, and administration. Students are represented on Chancellor's Awards committees, disciplinary boards, Parking Appeals Committee, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and the Communication Council. Minutes and year-end reports for the committees are posted in the Information Repository.

### *Strategic Planning Committee*

Each of the six operational areas selects designees to serve on the Strategic Planning Committee: Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Student Affairs. The representation on the committee is reviewed annually, with each area leader responsible for forwarding designees to the committee chair for consideration and appointment by the President. The President is also a standing, voting member of this committee.

The Committee is charged with facilitating the development of the College strategic plan, guiding the establishment of the institutional goals and objectives, and monitoring the progress of key strategies and core objectives under each strategic goal, as specified in the [2020-2025 Clinton Community College Strategic Plan](#). The guidelines for accomplishing this charge are denoted in the Strategic Planning Procedure Manual (EVID: St-VII-4.7). This manual and all committee agendas, minutes, documents, and presentations are located in the Information Repository for expedient access. Detailed information about the membership and function of the Strategic Planning Committee can be found in the section on Standard I.

### *Communication Council*

The Communication Council helps to maintain effective College-wide communication by encouraging open and meaningful dialogue. A key function of the council is to monitor campus climate by providing opportunities to address concerns regarding issues of governance and representation. The council membership, as outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual, consists of the College President and one representative elected for a two-year term from each of the following groups: teaching faculty, non-teaching faculty, administrative support staff, maintenance and clerical support staff, students, and Board of Trustees (EVID: St-VII-4.8). Members are charged with bringing forth for discussion matters of concern from the groups they represent. For example, in 2019 the Official Communication Policy of Clinton Community College (EVID: St-VII-4.9) and Email Procedures (EVID: St-VII-4.10) were developed in order to strengthen communication on campus. Also in 2019, the Communication Council led the Climate Survey Task Force in the absence of the Director of Human Resources, and the Council has been tracking progress on the goals that emerged from the survey.

### **Faculty Council**

The Faculty Council is charged with the responsibility for the initiation, development, and implementation of the educational program, particularly in the areas of curriculum, methods of instruction, research, service programs, and other matters closely related to academic programs. The Faculty Council advises and consults with the President in this regard, for the purpose of finalizing such programs and practices with the Board of Trustees (EVID: St-VII-1.3).



The regular membership of the Faculty Council is composed of the President of the College, administrative officers appointed by the President, full-time members of the professional staff holding academic rank, and full-time non-teaching faculty members. The Faculty Council standing committees consist of the following: Academic Standards, Assessment, Cultural Affairs, Curriculum, General Education, Learning Resources, and Professional Development. Specific charges related to each of these committees are listed in Article VII of the Faculty Council bylaws (EVID: St-VII-1.4).

**Student Participation in Governance**

Students are invited to serve on a host of campus-wide committees including student conduct boards, Faculty Student Association, Campus Safety, Athletics, Campus Diversity and Inclusion, Foundation Board, and Board of Trustees. Students are invited to serve on committees and task forces which may be reviewing campus policies, the Student Code of Conduct, and contracts with area vendors that are providing service to the College community. Student engagement and input are critical to the success of the College and provide students with valuable experiences with financing, contracts, policy development, and campus governance.

Students actively participate in shared governance at Clinton Community College through the Student Senate (EVID: St-VII-1.5). The Senate is made up of up to 16 student senators, elected by the student body, including four officers, responsible for the administration of the student activities fee monies as outlined by SUNY requirements (EVID: St-VII-1.6). It is also the deciding body to charter student organizations and coordinate their activities (EVID: St-VII-1.7).

**Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership and Shared Governance**

In Fall 2019 and February 2020, the College undertook two surveys to assess the effectiveness of communication, leadership, and shared governance at the College: an internal climate survey and a shared governance survey. The survey results indicated general satisfaction with leadership and shared governance but also a need for better communication. Responses reflected the challenging times the College is facing and a desire for improvement in the overall climate.

**Clinton Community College Climate Survey Results**

A work group of 11 faculty and staff members conducted an internal climate survey for the entire campus, consisting of 51 questions that fell into the following seven categories: Equity, Fairness and Respect, Decision Making, Communication, Work Environment, Leadership, Professional Development, and Student Service. Ninety-two employees responded to the survey. A summary of the results was shared with the College community during a town hall meeting and via email (EVID: St-VII-5.1). The full survey results can also be found in the Information Repository. Below are significant findings relevant to Standard VII from the 2019 Clinton Community College Campus Climate Survey Summary when compared to the survey conducted in 2016 (Table 14).

**Table 14: Campus Climate Survey – Significant Findings from 2019 as Compared to 2016**

<b>Decision Making</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Decision makers seek advice from experts in the field if needed” - Improved over 20%</li> <li>• “Decisions are made with appropriate department/area involvement” - Improved over 13%</li> <li>• “I have had opportunities to be involved in campus planning” - Declined around 7%</li> </ul>

<b>Communication</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I understand the mission of Clinton Community College” - Improved over 12%</li> <li>• “Important information is regularly shared on campus” - Improved over 24%</li> <li>• “I feel well-informed on what is happening on campus” - Improved around 10%</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I feel comfortable talking to HR or Administration if I get no assistance or resolution from my supervisor” - Declined over 6%</li> <li>• “I have sufficient opportunities to meet with my supervisor to discuss my performance” - Declined over 7%</li> <li>• “I have sufficient opportunities to evaluate my supervisor” - Over 50% disagreed</li> </ul>

After the results were shared, the Climate Survey Task Force and Communication Council met to develop and discuss campus wide goals that could be garnered from these results (EVID: St-VII-5.2). The 2019 Climate Survey Goals document was developed and continues to track the progress on the following eight goals: fill human resources director position, fill Career Services Coordinator position, review evaluation process for position in leadership, improve exit interview process, develop a procedure for succession planning, utilize Professional Development Committee to showcase professional development opportunities, improve overall campus communication, and encourage respect and professionalism. This document is reviewed and updated by the Communication Council each semester. The next internal Clinton Community College Climate Survey is scheduled for Fall 2021.

### Shared Governance Survey Results

All College employees were invited to participate in the shared governance survey (EVID: St-VII-5.3). There were 26 respondents. Overall, the survey results were quite positive, particularly for categories involving the importance of understanding and applying shared governance as they relate to the Board of Trustees, the President, the College administration, faculty, and students. However, communication and climate were revealed as two areas in need of improvement (Table 15).

**Table 15: Shared Governance Survey Responses\***

<b><i>Institutional Communication and Climate for Shared Governance are areas in which improvement is needed. (52% and 56%, respectively)</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Collegiality, respect, tolerance and civility.” - 65% positive</li> <li>• “Negotiations and communications...are open and carried out in good faith...” - 46% positive</li> </ul>
<b><i>The Board’s Role in Shared Governance was viewed positively (83%)</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “the local Board of Trustees understands its role as a policy-making body and is not inappropriately involved in the day-to-day operations of the institution.” - 95% positive</li> <li>• Board members “inform themselves on governance issues.” – 68% positive</li> </ul>
<b><i>The President’s Role in Shared Governance is viewed in an even more favorable light (94%)</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The President “accepts...faculty/campus governance decisions and recommendations...e.g., curriculum and academic standards” - 100% positive</li> <li>• The President “seeks meaningful faculty/campus governance input” in which faculty has “interest but not primary responsibility.” - 86% positive</li> </ul>
<b><i>Faculty’s Role in Shared Governance was positive (88%)</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Faculty accept their responsibility in...academic standards by participating in related faculty/campus governance processes.” - 100% positive</li> <li>• “The roles between faculty/campus governance and collective bargaining [being] clearly defined and understood” - 71% positive</li> </ul>

<b><i>The Student’s Role in Shared Governance was also viewed overall in a relatively favorable way (76%)</i></b>
<b><i>Joint Decision-Making also had positive results (78%)</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is “joint responsibility for the selection and evaluation of the president and senior administrators.” - 100% positive</li> <li>• “Regarding existing or prospective physical resources” and “budgeting” - 50% positive</li> </ul>
<b><i>Structural Arrangements for Governance was another very favorable category (95%)</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Faculty determine how their representatives are selected.” - 100% positive</li> <li>• “The faculty/campus governance body meets on a regular basis.” - 90% positive</li> </ul>

*\*A result is considered positive when respondents indicate that expectations are met or exceeded. Where applicable, the highest and lowest rated items for each category are shown, with the average positive response rate noted in parentheses.*

## **Assessment of College Administration, Faculty, and Staff**

### Evaluation of Administration

Administrators who are direct reports to the President meet regularly with the President. During these meetings each direct report discusses yearly goals and objectives. These administrators also provide monthly reports to the Board of Trustees that describe progress made in their respective area of responsibility. This provides the Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff information on developments and achievements in all sectors of the College. The President also holds an annual retreat with representatives of all College constituencies to report on progress with institutional and departmental goals.

### Evaluation of Faculty and Staff

All Faculty Association members are subject to evaluation for the purpose of improvement of instruction and services. This information is also essential for reappointment, tenure, and promotion recommendations. Full-time teaching faculty are responsible for completing a yearly self-evaluation in the form of a portfolio or narrative that addresses the following criteria: effectiveness as a teacher, contributions to the College, and professional growth. Non-teaching faculty complete a yearly evaluation focusing on effectiveness in job performance, contributions to the College, and professional growth. Evaluations are reviewed by direct supervisors (EVID: St-VII-5.4). Members of the Coalition receive annual written evaluations from their immediate supervisors. Before the evaluation becomes part of the Coalition member’s file, a conference between the member and supervisor is held to discuss the results and provide an opportunity for the member to respond in writing (EVID: St-VII-5.5). All members of the CSEA bargaining unit are evaluated on their job performance by their immediate supervisor once each year during the first five years of service with additional evaluations made every other year after their fifth year (EVID: St-VII-5.6).

## **Conclusion**

The evidence presented here supports the claim that Clinton Community College is governed and administered in a way that supports its mission and goals, provides an open and transparent form of administration, and embraces input from management, faculty, staff, students, and the community. The College maintains sufficient autonomy to develop and provide academic programs that serve all of its constituencies. Of particular note, the College has faced significant challenges from lower enrollment, unanticipated changes in state funding, and the pandemic. Despite these challenges, its leadership has not only maintained, but improved overall functions of the College, focusing on its mission, vision, and values.

## Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation

- Fill current administrative vacancies that are crucial for College operations as identified through the strategic planning process.
- Prepare for and communicate succession planning for vacancies.
- Review and revise current evaluation processes for positions in leadership.
- Strengthen campus-wide communication about decision-making processes.
- Establish a planning and budgeting committee to facilitate input from all campus constituencies.

## Standard VII Supporting Documents

- 🔗 St-VII-1.1 NY State Education Law Article 126
- 🔗 St-VII-1.2 PLACEHOLDER 2021-22 Organizational Chart
- 🔗 St-VII-1.3 Faculty-Council-Bylaws (p.1)
- 🔗 St-VII-1.4 Faculty Council Bylaws
- 🔗 St-VII-1.5 Student Senate Bylaws
- 🔗 St-VII-1.6 SUNY Policy on Student Activity Fees
- 🔗 St-VII-1.7 Student Senate Webpage
- 🔗 St-VII-2.1 NY State Education Law Article 8 Section 355
- 🔗 St-VII-2.2 NY State Education Law Article 126 Section 6304
- 🔗 St-VII-2.3 NY State Education Law Article 126 Section 6303
- 🔗 St-VII-2.4 New York Codes, Rules, Regulations Title 8 Part 602.3
- 🔗 St-VII-2.5 NY State Education Law Article 126 Section 6305
- 🔗 St-VII-2.6 New York Codes, Rules, Regulations Title 8 Part 604.2
- 🔗 St-VII-2.7 Board of Trustees Bylaws Approved 11.15.16
- 🔗 St-VII-2.8 CCC Policies and Procedures
- 🔗 St-VII-2.9 Board of Trustees-By Laws Article II Section 2
- 🔗 St-VII-2.10 BOT Conflict of Interest Policy
- 🔗 St-VII-2.11 Orientation Meeting Packet - CCC Board of Trustees
- 🔗 St-VII-2.12 Board of Trustees Bylaws Article I Section 6
- 🔗 St-VII-3.1 New York Codes, Rules and Regulations Title 8 Part 604.3
- 🔗 St-VII-3.2 College Committees 2020-21, FC Committees FA20
- 🔗 St-VII-3.3 Board of Trustees Bylaws Article I Section 10
- 🔗 St-VII-4.1 Student Affairs Webpage
- 🔗 St-VII-4.2 College Foundation Webpage
- 🔗 St-VII-4.3 CCC Policies and Procedures Sect 0501
- 🔗 St-VII-4.4 CCC Policies and Procedures Sect 0700
- 🔗 St-VII-4.5 Information Technology Webpage
- 🔗 St-VII-4.6 Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy
- 🔗 St-VII-4.7 Strategic Planning Procedure Manual 2020-2025
- 🔗 St-VII-4.8 CCC Policies and Procedures Sect 0303
- 🔗 St-VII-4.9 Official Communication Policy 2019
- 🔗 St-VII-4.10 Email Procedures 2019
- 🔗 St-VII-5.1 CCC Campus Climate Survey Summary 2019
- 🔗 St-VII-5.2 Climate Survey Goals 2019 - updated 2021.03.24
- 🔗 St-VII-5.3 Shared Governance Survey Results 2020
- 🔗 St-VII-5.4 Faculty Association Contract 2014-2017 Article XII
- 🔗 St-VII-5.5 Coalition Agreement 2014-2016 Article 9
- 🔗 St-VII-5.6 Clinton CSEA Contract Article 7

## Self-Study Steering Committee and Work Group Membership

### Clinton Community College Middle States Self-Study Steering Committee

Dr. John Kowal	Vice-President for Academic Affairs	Co-Chair, Self-Study Chair, Work Group 1
Margaret Courson	Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator Professor of Mathematics	Co-Chair, Self-Study Chair, Work Group 5 Accreditation Liaison Officer
Jarrod Cone	Chair, Faculty Council Chair, Criminal Justice and Social and Behavioral Sciences departments Assistant Professor of Psychology	Chair, Work Group 7
Shaun Irland	Assistant Professor of English	Chair, Work Group 3
Anna Miarka-Grzelak	Dean of Enrollment Management	Chair, Work Group 4
Lee Ann Thomas	Professor of Humanities	Chair, Work Group 2
Michael Zerrahn	Assistant Professor of Business and Accounting	Chair, Work Group 6

### Work Group 1: Standard I – Mission and Goals

Dr. John Kowal, Chair	Vice-President for Academic Affairs
Bernard Bassett	Member, Board of Trustees
Katrina Evens	Director of Nursing and Allied Health
Julie Hanson	Professor of Mathematics
Sarah Jennette	Systems and Electronic Services Librarian

### Work Group 2: Standard II – Ethics and Integrity

Lee Ann Thomas, Chair	Professor of Humanities
Angela Alphonso	Associate Professor of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation
Ian Berkoff	Assistant Professor of Humanities
Dr. Christopher Drennan	Professor of History, Political Science and Economics
Devi Momot	Member, Board of Trustees

### Work Group 3: Standard III – Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

Shaun Irland, Chair	Assistant Professor of English
Angela Barnaby	Professor of Mathematics
Gina Brandolino	Assistant Professor of Nursing
Donna Lynch	Chair, Business and Math Departments/Professor of Mathematics
Dawn Maille	Assistant Professor of Nursing



#### **Work Group 4: Standard IV – Support of the Student Experience**

Anna Miarka-Grzelak, Chair	Dean of Enrollment Management
Eric Arnold	Associate Professor of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation
Dr. Karen Case	Instructional Designer/Distance Learning Coordinator
Angela Kelley	Community and Workforce Development Specialist
Mary LaPierre	Director of Financial Aid
Sarah McCarty	Director of Campus Life
Chrisa O’Connell	Student Support Services Coordinator
June VanAlphen	Student

#### **Work Group 5: Standard V – Educational Effectiveness Assessment**

Margaret Courson, Chair	Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinator/Professor of Mathematics
Catherine Figlioli	Librarian
Dr. Lynn Fowler	Chair, Science Department/Professor of Science
Gary Henry	Associate Professor of Science
Richard Lawrence	Assistant Professor of Technology
Gina Lindsey	Professor of Humanities

#### **Work Group 6: Standard VI – Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement**

Michael Zerrahn, Chair	Assistant Professor of Business and Accounting
Dr. Wendy Baker	Vice President for Institutional Advancement
John Borner	Dean of Student Affairs
Nina Coolidge	Vice Chair, CCC Board of Trustees
Michelle Drollette	Senior Accountant
Michael Lawliss	Science Lab Technology Assistant
Marisa Miller-Spadafora	Accountant
Ashley Morales	Accountant
Robert Trombley	Director of Buildings and Grounds

#### **Work Group 7: Standard VII – Governance, Leadership, and Administration**

Jarrold Cone, Chair	Chair, Faculty Council/ Chair, Criminal Justice and Social and Behavioral Sciences Departments/Assistant Professor of Psychology
Christina Cone	Adjunct Instructor of Science
Joanna Jackson	Assistant Professor of English
Kelly Misner	STEM Success and Retention Coordinator
George Rock	Member, CCC Board of Trustees

## Clinton Community College Board of Trustees

### Clinton Community College Board of Trustees, 2021-2022

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Nina D. Coolidge	Vice Chairperson	Chazy
Mark A. Leta	Treasurer	Peru
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Bernard Bassett	Member	Morrisonville
Devi Momot	Member	Plattsburgh
Rolla A. Parker III	Member	Champlain
Elizabeth Vincencio	Member	Plattsburgh
Serena Jalbert	Student Trustee	