Comprehensive Quality Review
HIGHLIGHTS REPORT
February 2020

Delta College

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Introduction

Delta College submitted its Systems Portfolio on May 30, 2019, and received its Systems Appraisal on September 3, 2019. The Appraisal report included eight Core Components that were deemed "Unclear" to the reviewers. We acknowledge the need to provide a stronger narrative, along with supporting evidence, in order to demonstrate that we meet all of the Criteria for Accreditation.

This Comprehensive Quality Review report provides an overview response for each of the 20 questions within the "Unclear" criterion. It also provides a large, separate set of data and documents, which are located in a public website environment. This will allow the team of peer reviewers to evaluate Delta College's status, prior to our planned site visit on Monday-Tuesday, March 23-24, 2020. This information is not exhaustive and our teams on campus are reviewing our processes and data to further respond to any additional questions during the visit.

As we prepare, we are assembling information that is compelling, relevant and persuasive, in order to corroborate our belief that Delta College meets the standards leading to further Accreditation.

Criterion 2.A. - Integrity and Ethical Behavior (Category 4.4 – Integrity)

One of Delta College's Strategic Focus Areas within our Strategic Plan is "People Focus", particularly toward our faculty, staff and all other employees. In an effort to help build a strong team of leaders, the Human Resources (HR) department offers a variety of training efforts.

Delta College's HR staff has an intranet site, which provides useful information, guidance and links to assist all supervisors. There are a broad range of policies and procedures focused on setting expectations for ethical behavior within the institution. All of these documents are posted on the College's intranet portal, which is accessible to all employees.

To maintain a clear governing philosophy and structure, the Delta College Board of Trustees regularly reviews its Bylaws and Operating Parameters. The first section of the Operating Parameters includes a section entitled Delta College Board of Trustees Ethical Standards (pg. 3), which is adapted from the standards developed and published by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). Transparency and openness are exhibited through public postings of Board of Trustee meetings, along with access to their agendas and minutes, which are posted on the College's public website.

As a publicly funded institution, Delta College is committed to providing information, including financial reports to the public. In the footer of our public website, there is a direct link to numerous reports, compiled on a Transparency page. The information complies with the State of Michigan Public Act 60 of 2013, Section 209, which requires community colleges to publish a transparency webpage and stipulates the content.

Delta College's policy with respect to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is to comply with the State of Michigan law in all respects and to respond to FOIA requests in a consistent, fair and even-handed manner regardless of who makes such a request. Information on FOIA can be found on the College's public website. These requests may also be referred to as Public Record Requests or Open Record Requests as terminology varies from state to state. This public accountability encourages clarity in record-keeping and procedures and supports reporting transparency, consistency, and accuracy.

Further information can be found in a separate narrative document on employee policies, procedures and training regarding ethical behavior.

Criterion 3.A.1. – Teaching/Learning - Courses and Programs (Categories 1.3 Academic Program Design and 1.4 - Academic Program Quality)   *SEE ALSO: Criterion 4.A.6. – Teaching/Learning - Success of Graduates*

Delta College developed tables of Assessment results, for processes associated with General Education Learning Outcomes. For three years, Delta has successfully maintained its assessment schedule, providing data for each learning outcome. This has allowed the team to map trends and to review the effectiveness of changes.

The assessment process relies on faculty to design their own assessment tool and submit the results for specific students who have earned 45 credit hours or more. This credit hour restriction selects for students who are nearing the end of their course work on a two-year program. The instructor-assigned scores are reviewed for rigor by a General Education Resource Group, a committee of faculty who offer support to other faculty in assessing a specific general education outcomes. Information is then analyzed based upon the following scale:

- Level 0 = No skill demonstrated or work not submitted. These values include students who may have been later dropped from the course.
- Level 1 = Skills are emerging, but still less than acceptable.
- Level 2 = Skills are developed. Minimally acceptable.
- Level 3 = Skill mastery demonstrated.

When interpreting the data (see table 1.1.A., page 2), we see in the large samples that the percentage of scores at the 2 and 3 levels surpassed the target of 70% in all general education outcome categories and the target was met for all outcomes. When examining possible faculty assessment performance improvement, Delta has identified a number of ways to help, such as professional development, promoting the Teaching/Learning Center (T/LC) and creating discipline specific student guidelines.

Within the same analysis, we acknowledge that our common learning outcome assessment process samples a wider pool of students than those who actually receive degrees. While faculty use individual rubrics tailored to specific skills associated with their specific assessment tool, results are reported in terms of a generalized rubric that stresses proficiency levels.

In the General Education Learning Outcome (GELO) Assessment Results document, we sampled the pool of students who actually received an Associates in Arts (AA) or an Associates in Science (AS) degree, as well as students receiving any degree or certificate from Delta College. The results indicate that graduates of Delta College are able to demonstrate proficiency in all the common learning outcomes as seen by the high percentage of students scoring at a 2 or 3. Although the percentage of AA and AS graduates sampled in the first year of the assessment cycle was below 10% of the total student population, it remained at or above 20% for the remaining four outcomes assessed. These results give us confidence in our sampling methods.

Results of the assessment cycle have been shared with faculty at division meetings and Faculty Forum. A workshop was also offered an Adjunct Academy to educate adjunct faculty about our general education assessment process. As faculty become more familiar with the assessment process, we expect our rates of participation by faculty to increase.

Criterion 3.A.2. - Teaching and Learning – Articulates Learning Goals (Categories 1.3: Academic Program Design and Category 1.4: Academic Program Quality)

Learning Outcomes at the course and program level are written by faculty with input from Advisory Committees, CIP code information, specialized accreditation, and the chairperson of the Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC). The outcomes are submitted, discussed and approved through the curriculum process. Occupational certificate and degree programs typically have the same core learning outcomes for the occupation, and are differentiated by degrees also including at least 15 credit hours of general education credit. This results in expanding the learning goals. All Learning Outcomes must be assessed through the progression of the program.

In reviewing the Appraisal comments, we realize the need for improvement in our data collection and analysis in order to identify direct evidence that students in the occupational programs are engaged while working toward a credential. Therefore, we will:

- Work to identify through current program courses assignments and program accreditation requirements, the student objectives and outcomes that support this goal;
- Implement a system to audit this outcome similar to the IPM audit system described in Criterion 4.B.4.;
- Include this goal in advisory committee meetings and outcomes to ensure this data is embedded into occupational programs.

Criterion 3.A.3. – Teaching/Learning - Consistent Quality and Goals (Categories 1.3 Academic Program Design & 1.4 - Academic Program Quality) *SEE ALSO - Criterion 4.A.1. – Teaching/Learning - Regular Program Reviews*

Assessment at Delta College is multi-level and is overseen primarily by two committees: 1) Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC) and 2) General Education Curriculum and Assessment Committee (GECAC). Faculty members are responsible for assessing student learning in academic career programs, the general education program and disciplines.

SLAC is charged by the Vice President of Instruction and Learning Services and assesses degree/certificate programs. The committee oversees the Outcomes Assessment Tracking System (OATS), which is a database of information that includes enumeration of the types of assessment that are done, trying to emphasize ideas such as the use of direct assessment within the courses/program. The rationale for the data and how it was procured are left to the final assessment report.

Members also help other faculty in all programs and courses determine and document exactly what it is that students are learning through the use of assessment. SLAC provides input on the quality of assessment work and makes recommendations to enhance student learning at Delta College. Programs must have an Excel spreadsheet on file, which includes:

- All program outcomes
- Curriculum map of the courses in the program as to where the different outcomes are identified as: Introductory (I), Practice (P), or Mastery (M)
- Assessment plan for when, how, where, program outcomes are assessed (done on a rotating basis so that all outcomes are assessed in a 4-5 year cycle)
- Assessment Reports based on previous assessments

As faculty submit reports, they are put into the OATS database, and are available on the internal employee portal site. Reports are archived at this site as well. The result of the review from SLAC is to either accept the report or it is sent back for clarification on some points. Reports without some kind of action planned are sent back for clarification as to how the program plans to implement any changes based on the data collected.

SLAC tracks and analyzes information that are constantly added to the OATS database. Effort is being put into the larger programs (deemed by having at least five graduates per year on average) for improvement. Sample analysis includes:

- Types of assessment performed to obtain the data (page 2);
- % response for important aspects related to data interpretation and next steps (page 3);
- % of submitted reports mapping to each of the college's Instructional Student Learning Outcome's (ISLO) (highest order outcomes) (page 4);
- Actions taken by programs from results of assessment (page 5); and
- Frequency of planned actions from programs determined by ISLO (pages 6-7).

All reports received by SLAC have components of future work or improvements based on the results. This may include assignment changes, course changes, adjustments in the assessment tool, or possibly to "continue to monitor" as it can be difficult to improve on items such as pass rate for licensure exam when that rate is already at 100%. Data collected in the linked file includes not only the relative success of a given assessment from a report, but also cumulative statistics on the types of assessments used, and the frequency of the type of actions planned.

SLAC also performed an Assessment of Program Outcomes, which was then mapped to ISLO's information from the OATS database. In particular, the analysis looked at the frequency of planned action advised from assessments for the following ISLOs, with the highest ranking action indicated in parenthesis for reference:

- Apply Knowledge and Skills (Change class assignment or activity)
- Think Critically (Change class assignment or activity)
- Communicate Effectively (Change class assignment or activity)
- Act Responsibly (Continue to monitor)

The SLAC committee produces a document that recaps some of the issues identified and actions taken to improve the quality of the process. Over the past few years, participation in the assessment process has increased

and so has the quality of the reports received. It became clear that many program representatives would come to SLAC without knowledge of previous assessment in their subject area. When someone retired or a position changed, there was no paper trail for new people to follow. To correct this problem, a repository of files was created that all employees can access, building a virtual paper trail for the future.

All courses/programs are consistent across all modes of delivery and location (including dual enrollment). This is ensured by course and program specific outcomes and objectives. All modalities and locations are assessed routinely within programs and reported out to the major assessment committees.

Information on the issues that were identified by SLAC, and how they have been addressed, is outlined further in response to Criterion 4.A.1.

Criterion 3.D.3. – Teaching/Learning/Quality/Resources - Academic advising for students (Category 2.1 Current and Prospective Student Need)

Delta's Counseling and Advising Office has the ability to track data regarding student visits to the office, however, consistent data collection has been identified as a possible issue. Delta is working on a consistent data process in 2020 to show clearer results of how the Counseling and Advising office staff impact student success.

A review brought forward the need to implement a process this year to be able to show clearer results of how the Counseling and Advising office impacts students. An analysis of the available data shows that, on average, between 2016 and 2019, 88.5% of student visits are for Good Standing students, 6.6% with Academic Caution, and 4.1% with Academic Probation students. The most frequent, or "top" services provided to students are: course advisement, program information, transfer questions, and inquiry of other services. Inquiry of other services could be any types of questions students may bring, such as graduation information, pass/no credit options, substitutions and waivers, athletic restrictions, and more. Within our average of over 21,000 visits per academic year, about 50% come back for advising services the next academic year.

Guided Pathways focuses on the advising process, to limit choice, and keep students on track. Delta College has expanded the Guided Pathway into a three-stage model, as detailed below:
- Stage 1: Pre-college admission, college preparation, and first term registration.
  - Data collected includes admissions data, academic assessment scores, high school and college transcripts, career goals, and financial data for financial aid applications.
- Stage 2: Focuses on academics and retention.
  - Data collected includes registration information, career development data, and financial data.
  - In this stage, students are tracked through completion of developmental courses, completion of required math and English, student success including GPA, satisfactory academic progress, and retention data.
- Stage 3: Focuses on graduation, and transition to work or transfer.
  - Data collected includes degree audits, job search data, transition data, and data documenting transition credentials.

Further information can be found in a separate narrative document on student counseling, advising, and co-curricular assessments.

Criterion 3.D.4. – Teaching/Learning/Quality/Resources - Infrastructure and Technology (Category 2.1 – Current and Prospective Student Need)

One aspect of effective teaching and learning is the allocation of technology resources for use in the classroom, in the office and for communicating with students. The College's annual General Fund budget includes a transfer of $3 of its $20 per contact hour technology fee to the Plant Fund to accumulate funds for future technology needs across the Main Campus and its Downtown Centers.

Delta College's information systems are the product of a robust and secure infrastructure that operates as an ecosystem, with a goal of both timely and reliable information. Even in a time of lower student populations and tighter budgets, the President, Board of Trustees and the College leadership work to ensure that programs are funded to maintain the dynamic environment.

Delta College contracts with Ellucian for oversight of its Information Technology (IT) services. They are also charged with assisting the College in developing technology plans to make sure the College is preparing for the future. Technology infrastructure, planning, monitoring and continuous improvement are guided by the Information Technology Strategic Plan, which covers five key areas (Student Success, Community, Sustainability, People and Communication). Delta's IT Mission is to "provide information access, technology resources and support to promote the success of students and the community we serve," and the IT Vision is for Delta to be "a leader in providing and integrating relevant technology services to support its mission."

Further information on Delta College's resource allocation for technology can be found in Criterion 5.A.1. and a separate narrative document on information technology planning, budgeting and benchmarking.

Another factor affecting the teaching and learning process is the schedule for when and where courses are offered. Delta College recently transitioned to a staffing model that included the addition of Associate Deans, who are each responsible for one of Delta College's five academic divisions. That team of five Associate Deans tackled the issue of evidence-based academic scheduling, in order to build better opportunities for students. With declining enrollments, changes were needed in order to build student-centric schedules. The Associate Deans' strategy included building a "schedule-to-run" list of offerings (page 7), in order to improve the overall schedule efficiency.

Key in the discussions were ideas on how to improve student success including factors such as: pathways, staffing, sequencing of general education courses, and sharing faculty across disciplines to meet student needs. Additionally, Delta was opening a new Downtown Saginaw Center in fall 2019, so a new approach was needed at that location. Discussions were collaborative and included members of the Dean's Council, the Registrar, the Dean of Retention and Academic Deans. Communication also included the Director of Dual Enrollment, in order improve the schedule to better meet the needs of high school students.

A main goal was to improve course offerings to ensure students could create student-friendly schedules. Addressed were: program pathways, reduction of extensive gaps between classes, with a goal of being more intentional about the general education courses offerings, and to ensure they were in alignment with program needs.

Testing of the work included having student employees create mock schedules to determine if course days and times needed to be modified. For example, for the Chemical Technology program, it was determined it would be best to move BIO 110 from Monday/Wednesday to Tuesday/Thursday in the winter semester. We also shifted Chemistry classes in the fall (see page 2).

The tasks included building an appropriate schedule for the Downtown Saginaw Center (pages 3-4). The resulting schedule not only increased the number and variety of sections offered, but it was done with intentional focus on sections and times. General education courses on the schedule support the programs being offered at the Center. Notably, subjects were increased from 10 to 21, Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA) section offerings increased from 7 to 21, and developmental education sections from 11 to 16.

The semester's schedule was streamlined after an examination found sections to combine. The team removed redundancies in the schedule so two similar sections were collapsed into one, meaning they no longer competed with each other, which increased fill rates. Agility was addressed by implementing "ghost sections" on the books. These are pending sections that are behind the scenes and not seen by students during registration. This strategy limits the number of sections on the books, so visible sections fill before new ones are opened.

When new sections are opened, we are assured internally that staffing has been considered for each new section. A communication plan is now in place to contact students who are on wait lists, to notify them of the newly opened section. That same plan is utilized by Student Services staff if a section is canceled or a new section is offered. With active communication of section changes, Delta has been able to recapture 63.4% of canceled section enrollments (see page 6).

Delta College's Strategic Plan has also focused on accelerated class scheduling. The goal of increasing online section offerings (page 5), is to increase enrollment and retention. We have made increases already, but the team is examining best practices from other institutions to find methods that can be incorporated into Delta College's scheduling.

Criterion 3.D.5. – Teaching/Learning/Quality/Resources - Student Guidance on Info Resources (Category 2.1 – Current and Prospective Student Need)

Delta College's Library Learning Information Center (LLIC) has been organized as a "one-stop center" for a number of services for students and staff. The LLIC houses: the Library, Open Computer Lab, Teaching/Learning Center (T/LC) and the WRIT (Writing, Reading, & Information Technology) Center. Both the T/LC and WRIT offer professional and peer tutoring through a system of both drop-in times and pre-scheduled appointments.

Delta librarians have developed instruction, in collaboration with departmental faculty, to ensure library instructions support class research and resources outcomes and objectives. There is a dedicated Library computer lab, which can be reserved by faculty who request Library staff instruction on topics including: the need for quality sources; library databases; conducting a simple database search to locate an article (magazine, newspaper, and scholarly); differentiating and evaluating digital source types; finding, using, and evaluating web resources; and finding source citation information, among many others.

Delta's LLIC also provides an online guide to provide faculty, staff, and students at Delta College with an understanding of copyright law and fair use. Since copyright issues can be complex, Delta offers this service in order to help everyone understand the basics. It stresses the legal penalties that may result from a failure to comply with copyright law.

The Testing Center is located adjacent to the space and in addition to its normal business operations, handles student testing needs resulting from student absences. These occur due to life circumstances such as illness or are the result of potential weather closures, affecting classroom testing options. The LLIC is designed to meet the learning needs of our diverse community by providing access to information and other resources.

At the Main Campus and Downtown Centers, Delta offers open computer labs to provide students and faculty with the computing resources required for their success. Lab assistants are available to answer basic software and hardware questions as well as assist with minor technical problems.

In addition to computer services, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) provides faculty with services, such as troubleshooting, maintenance, and repairs to classroom technologies across campus. This is done in support of Delta's technically enhanced "smart" classrooms.

Criterion 4.A.1. – Teaching/Learning - Regular Program Reviews (Categories 1.3 Academic Program Design and 1.4 Academic Program Quality)   *SEE ALSO - Criterion 3.A.3. – Teaching/Learning - Consistent Quality and Goals*

SLAC has developed a Rubric, used by committee members to quality check Program Discipline Assessment Reports developed by faculty members and submitted for review. Each of these tools are intended to increase the ease of faculty involvement in the assessment process, especially for those new to the College.

Career programs are on a schedule for program review every three to five years, reviewing enrollment, completers, and course data. Faculty, staff and students are surveyed on program and college performance related to that program. Examples will be available on site.

In addition to assessments of courses, programs and student learning, the College must also maintain processes for creating new programs and program eliminations. When bringing forward a new program, the academic administration must provide a document to the Board of Trustees which includes information on: the need, background, mission relevance, staffing, required facilities, financial implication and a schedule of the required courses to meet the new certificate or degree.

When proposing programs for elimination, the academic administration must provide the following information to the Board of Trustees, who must approve of the change:

- Summary of discussions with faculty, industry Advisory Committee community members, Associate Deans and Curriculum Council;
- History of students declaring the program as a major;
- Rationale for elimination, such as industry changes or continued low enrollments; and
- Impact on faculty assigned to the program and to students currently in the program, indicating a plan for completion prior to elimination.

The Board of Trustees approved a list of programs for elimination, which was done in June 2018. It streamlined and clarified a number of multiple certificates and degrees that was causing enrollment issues, by

dividing the number of students into too many tracks for education.

Under the direction of the Vice President of Instruction and Learning Services, the GECAC committee has responsibility for oversight of the General Education assessment process. Regular work also occurs through the Curriculum Council, which oversees new program processes and new course approvals. That documentation is entered into the Curriculog database, which can then track progress on curricular changes over time. It can also provide source information that leads to the published online catalog.

Criterion 4.A.5. – Teaching/Learning/Evaluation/Improvement - Specialized Accreditation (Categories 1.3 Academic Program Design and 1.4 Academic Program Quality)

There is a broad range of information sharing as it relates to Program Assessment. Faculty should report to SLAC yearly, as a way of sharing program and student outcomes and results. Some programs with external licensure share their "Pass Rates for Career Programs" by posting results on Delta College's public website, on a page called Student Right to Know.

Delta College ensures that its programs meet or exceed the quality standards developed by industry or the state. To do so, we have a number of processes in place. We support specialized accreditation of our programs, with the currently accredited programs published in our catalog and on our website.

When a program of study is created (or a new accreditation is made available) the faculty and administration review the benefits of that specialized programmatic accreditation. When a specialized accreditation is found to be required for students to earn an industry recognized credential (i.e. certifications or license) or ensure the quality of our program, the specialized accreditation is supported. This provides a required third party review which ensures we have met the industry, state and national standards.

Delta College has an established procedure to determine the need to start a new program and whether that new program will require a specialized accreditation. When deciding whether to start a new program within a discipline, several factors are reviewed. There are Delta College guidelines, which are also reviewed in conjunction with program guidelines of the program accrediting body. This process is detailed further in the document describing the steps for selecting and implementing specialized accreditations.

In order to more definitively explain the process for seeking a specialized accreditation, we have provided an example. It involves the Surgical First Assistant Accreditation, which began through an inquiry made during a Nursing Advisory Committee meeting. One of our partner hospitals asked if Delta College could start this program to meet their needs.

Based upon that conversation, a multitude of steps were undertaken, and that process is summarized on the Specialized Accreditation Processes document. Among the many steps are: environmental scanning, employer feedback, number of jobs available, potential salaries, faculty feedback, needs survey, review of faculty credentials, submission of application, submission of self-study, and many, many more.

Criterion 4.A.6. – Teaching/Learning - Success of Graduates (Categories 1.3 Academic Program Design and 1.4 Academic Program Quality)   *SEE ALSO: Criterion 3.A.1. – Teaching/Learning - Courses and Programs*

The Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC) and General Education Curriculum and Assessment Committee (GECAC) review data each year and have made process improvements based on data analysis as documented on the Outcomes Assessment Tracking System (OATS). Programs can be compared, with internal and external benchmarks, to assess the effectiveness of its curriculum.

In Career and Technical Education programs, internal targets and external benchmarks are used as part of the assessment process to determine the effectiveness in student preparation for assessment/credentialing and/or licensing examinations. This is documented in yearly program reports for accreditation and in Advisory Committee notes. Benchmarks may vary depending on programmatic accreditation as well as by national averages in occupational fields. Examples from four programs are included below.

- Nursing
  - Internal benchmarks include: 70% or greater will complete the program within 150% of the program length and a job placement rate of 85%.

- o External benchmark includes 80% of all first-time test takers will pass the NCLEX-RN during the 12 month period (January-December). The program also compares annual first-time test taker pass rates to the national average, year-over-year.
- Physical Therapist Assistant
  - o Internal benchmarks include: 85% ultimate pass rate for the national licensure exam (or higher), 60% graduation/completion rate (or higher), and 90% employment rate (or higher).
  - o External benchmarks align with the internal benchmarks and compare Delta College students' licensure pass rate, as compared to national averages.
- Child Development
  - o In regards to internal benchmarks, it is helpful to look at some of the differentiations in benchmarks that exist at Delta College, based upon the program. For instance, internal benchmarks for the Child Development program include: the percentage of those candidates who completed the program within 200% (twice) of the published timeframe, within 150% of the published timeframe, and within 100% of the published timeframe. Other measures include retention rate among part-time candidates, retention rate among full-time candidates, and the success rate in all Child Development courses.
  - o No external benchmarks have been identified for comparison.
- Radiography
  - o Internal benchmarks include: 90% of graduates will pass the exam on the first attempt, a minimum of 77% of the students entering the program each fall will graduate within 30 months, and 75% of graduates seeking employment will be employed as a radiographer within 12 months after graduation.
  - o External benchmarks include: five-year average credentialing examination pass rate of not less than 75% at first attempt within six months of graduation, and five-year average job placement rate of not less than 75% within twelve months of graduation.

Targets and benchmarks may vary by program depending on programmatic accreditation as well as by national averages in occupational fields. Program faculty, with Advisory Committee input, determine internal targets. National credentialing rates and accreditation guidelines set external benchmarks.

Examination of the Radiography Program data reflected a problem that has now been addressed. Delta College's five year average indicated that only 61% of students were graduating within 30 months, which was below the desired 77% figure. Following a program assessment, we noted a negative trend at a particular point in the pathway. To address the problem, an additional course was added at that point, to improve student success. With a B grade or better in this course, students now fare better in the speed at which they can complete the program, as it improves learning throughout the sequence.

Delta also assesses the performance of students, with concentrations in Career and Technical Education programs, with industry recognized assessments, certification exams, or license exams to evaluate technical skill attainment. This encompasses 26 programs or certifications across the College.

The HLC Reviewers' comments in Delta's Systems Appraisal identified an issue that we will now be addressing. That comment indicated that Delta College needed a general framework to assess academic performance. A document called "Academic Services Performance Metrics" was developed and reviewed by members of the subcommittees preparing for the HLC Site Visit in March 2020. Delta believes the content will help faculty become more focused when building and analyzing metrics in a number of relevant academic categories such as: curriculum, academic course schedule, persistence and retention, as well as community commitment and financial sustainability. All categories link back to the College's overall Strategic Plan.

A steering committee of faculty, student services, and Institutional Research (IR) staff will be formed before the fall 2020 semester to manage the new Academic Services Performance Metrics. The committee will review the types of data used for each metric, assign internal targets and external benchmarks where appropriate, analyze data, and monitor the implementation of recommendations based on data analysis.

According to the anticipated timeline, work will continue throughout the winter semester with IR to identify national benchmarking data with the committee launching in September 2020. Subcommittees will be formed with

analysis of data from Academic Year 2019-2020. And, recommendations for improvement will be due by March 2021 to be included Academic Services Strategic Plan for 2021-2022. This cycle will be evaluated and repeated.

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Criterion 4.B.1. – Teaching/Learning/Evaluation/Improvement - Assessment of Student Learning (Categories 1.1 Common Learning Outcomes and 1.2 Program Learning Outcomes)

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During a prior HLC review, an issue was noted with the work of SLAC. Although there were program reports in the years prior to 2015 (2012-2013 and 2013-2014), there had been a marked decrease in reports filed, due to identified issues such as: turnover in program coordinators, the difficulty in obtaining access to the database, and difficulty in communication about the requirements for program assessment. While assessments were occurring, they were at a lesser rate than desired; and that gap has been addressed.

Based upon the problems identified, an effort was made to review the source of the issues, to identify possible remedies and to implement those changes. Due to this work, a number of internal changes were made in SLAC, which includes clearer access to the database by all users, training on how to use the database, and development of a repository of previous assessments. Additional resources have also been developed to assist faculty in their assessment processes. One element is a list of examples of assessment tools that faculty could use. These represent different definitions and potential examples of different forms of assessment that are available. The choices are identical to those in the assessment database and are intended to help with choosing the appropriate assessment. These improvements have streamlined the assessment process.

In addition, there is a SLAC Handbook which has major sections in it broken down related to creating program outcomes, curriculum maps, assessment plans, as well as advice on the pros and cons for many major types of assessments. A template has been developed for all faculty to utilize when writing up their Program Assessment to be able to submit to SLAC. That single page form is part of the Program Assessment Report, which includes the Program Assessment Plan, the Curriculum Map, and Learning Outcomes. These forms have been utilized for several years, which is building a record of consistency for evaluation purposes.

GECAC works on a three-year cycle for review and assessment. There are six General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO), so the process includes a review of two outcomes each year, throughout the three-year cycle. There has been an improvement with this process, which has now just been implemented. Previously, all data were collected in the winter semester and then the reports were written in the fall semester. Now, there will be data collected in each semester and a report written the next semester. This will divide the work load more evenly throughout the year, allowing both the Institutional Research department and the academic team, to spread the project work with greater consistency.

SLAC has developed an Annual Timetable for Program Assessment and recommends a four to five year cycle to go through all program outcomes. For programs with lower numbers of graduates, SLAC recommend continuous collection of data for all outcomes (yearly) and then look at collective results after four to five years. The details of what is collected is included in the Program Assessment Plan excel spreadsheet, along with a record of who completed the evaluation and how decisions are made.

Data is certainly an important basis of all program assessments and is collected at the time of assessment, when there are a large numbers of graduates. One way to see the outcome of this work is to review a completed Program Assessment Report. Data from the Criminal Justice Corrections Report - Associate in Applied Arts, from 2018-2019, "appeared to show the discipline is not only meeting, but exceeding standards for this chosen objective with the vast majority of students able to demonstrate an understanding of the distinctive court systems across all programs within the curriculum."

Career program review has continued to be performed, under the direction of the Dean of Career Education and Learning Partnerships. The use of Advisory Committees plays a huge role in maintaining industry relevance and membership includes a broad variety of employers with expertise on the program for which they are meeting. Members' feedback, and the Advisory Committee process in general, plays a significant role in curriculum revisions. Advisory Committees often hear about assessment results, which can be an important aspect of program currency or redesign, when needed. Minutes of these many meetings are maintained through the Dean of Career Education and Learning Partnerships' office, which can be accessed when programs are reviewed and assessed.

As a result of the Systems Appraisal process, Delta reviewed its Advisory Committee structure and realized it was difficult to track the changes suggested during those meetings and to pull the separate action items

from the minutes that are kept. This is an important step in tracking progress on the issues brought forward. A table called Advisory Committee Action Item Tracking, has now been created to track progress on the action items and to easily reflect the program improvements that have been suggested and pursued.

The Advisory Committee meeting process requires local (and some state) industry representatives, faculty and administrators to review, discuss, recommend improvements of program outcomes, student performance, knowledge, skills and competencies. In addition, we prepare for the Advisory Committee by reviewing labor market data on demand, wage, skills and knowledge required by industry. We use the EMSI and Labor Insight research findings and at least annually discuss these findings with faculty, administration and if needed Advisory Committee members.

We track licensure and certification pass rates to assess the success of our students. A recent analysis of external benchmarking information indicates how Delta College students have performed on licensure exams over the past two years. As a way of benchmarking, we also compare how our students' licensure exam scores measure up against those from other two-year institutions in the state. As can be seen from the data, Delta maintains a high pass rate (95.4% in 2016-2017 and 2017-2018) while having the fifth highest number of students pass an exam when comparing to all Michigan two-year colleges in 2017-2018.

If we were not to meet or exceed established benchmarks, then an action plan for improvement would be implemented by faculty and administration. However, not all programs have readily available sources of external benchmarking standards. In those cases, program faculty determine the internal benchmarks, which are decided by the type of assessment device used. Those faculty set the benchmark based on their experience with the subject matter and nature of the assessment chosen.

Criterion 4.B.2. – Teaching/Learning - Assessment of Learning Outcomes (Categories 1.1 Common Learning Outcomes and 1.2 Program Learning Outcomes)

Delta College views its instructional work through a lens of student success outcomes and has built its assessment processes accordingly. Program level assessment is overseen by the Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC). The common learning outcomes (GELOs) assessment is overseen by the General Education Curriculum and Assessment Committee (GECAC).

The choice of assessment method is left to the faculty in charge of the course in which the assessment artifact is to be taken (based on the assessment plan for the program). The SLAC handbook has a section on the different kinds of assessment tools that could be used, along with a listing of the pros and cons for each method. We encourage course-based assessment whenever possible.

The College has instituted a set of measures that deal with learning that occurs both inside and outside of the classroom. There are four Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO) which map to six General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO), as summarized below:

1. ISLO: Act responsibly.
    a. a. GELO: Think Civically: Demonstrate an understanding of diverse societies, ranging from local to global, in order to engage effectively in civic life.
    b. b. GELO: Cultivate Wellness: Demonstrate an understanding of wellness principles to promote physical and personal health.
2. 2. ISLO: Apply knowledge and skills.
    a. a. GELO: Utilize Technology Effectively: Solve a problem or accomplish a task using technology.
    b. b. GELO: Reason Quantitatively: Use quantitative information or analyze data within context to arrive at meaningful results.
3. 3. ISLO: Communicate effectively.
    a. a. GELO: Communicate Effectively: Communicate effectively in oral, written, or symbolic expression.
4. 4. ISLO: Think critically.
    a. a. GELO: Think Critically: Produce a defensible conclusion or solution using critical or creative thinking.

It is within the structure of the ISLO measures that co-curricular learning most often takes place. Some examples are included in a separate narrative document on [counseling, advising and co-curricular activities](#), which may be helpful to explain the nature of the ISLO's in practice.

The Student and Civic Engagement (SACE) Office is currently developing an assessment model for co-curricular and extra-curricular programs. Once that is in place, the model will be adapted to Enrollment Management Programs. SACE is also in the process of developing a portfolio system that allows students to collect non-credit program accomplishments.

Delta College has not historically use student learning outcomes to assess its co-curricular and extra-curricular programs. Rather, it used more traditional student satisfaction surveys and focus groups for needs assessments. In fall 2019, the College decided to begin a planning process that would lead to a comprehensive assessment strategy for most of its non-academic programs over the course of 2020 and 2021. SACE will take the lead in developing a comprehensive student learning outcomes assessment model to be applied initially to student engagement programs, but later also adpated for Enrollment Management programming and faculty led co-curricular programming.

Criterion 4.B.3. – Teaching/Learning/Evaluation/Improvement - Use Assessment to Improve Student Learning (Categories 1.1 Common Learning Outcomes and 1.2 Program Learning Outcomes)

The College has worked to both improve and streamline its assessment process. This has included work on its General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO) and Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO). SLAC, which is comprised of faculty and academic leadership members, have also sought to build templates for use by faculty and to provide a greater level of assessment professional development.

Further information on GELO and ISLO assessments are included in Criterion 3.A.1. and Criterion 4.A.6., with data that indicates student success is highest for "Think Civically" and "Cultivate Wellness" and slightly lower for the "Utilize Technology" and "Reason Quantitatively" GELOs. However, performance by all groups on all GELOs exceeded the College's initial internal target of 70%. Following the initial assessments, the College revised its long-term goal to an 80% level. First round data are available for all GELOs. Since the College is still completing its first cycle of assessment, no trend data is available.

When developing its GELOs, the College revised models from the Lumina Report, American Association of Colleges and Universities Essential Learning Outcomes, and the HLC statement on Assessment of Student Learning. These best-practice documents helped the College identify broad measurable outcomes appropriate for the two-year associate degree level graduates. Proficiency levels for each GELO are derived from a model provided by the Lumina Foundation Degree Qualifications Profile and reinforced by assessment resource groups that promote skill standards for the different GELOs.

Between 2013 and 2015 five general education outcomes were assessed across the College: 1) Quantitatively Literacy; 2) AAUI (Access, Analyze, and Use Information); 3) Writing; 4) Critical Thinking; and 5) Communicate Effectively. This represents five of the twelve outcomes/categories that existed at that time, although only ten are listed in the 2014 AQIP portfolio.

In the past, there was not a common standard/benchmark for these assessments. Each resource group set their own standard. None of the resource groups used the standard/benchmark that was used for the 2017-2019 cycle which states that 70% of the students of will score at a 2 or 3 level. It is worth noting that assessment of General Education Outcomes (also known as Common Learning Outcomes), was conducted prior to 2017.

Although ISLO's have not been fully implemented systemically, we are developing a way to implement ISLO's through a team-driven systemic approach. Given ISLO's wide-reaching impact across campus, all areas need to actively engage in the assessment process. The implementation will focus on:

- Full integration of ISLO's to all areas of campus;
- Assessing outcomes and objectives for each campus area;
- Creating an assessment plan and rubrics with effective tools for process improvement; and
- Streamlining the reporting to better capture data.

There is also an EDU course (EDU 379W - Assessment Program Discussion) that is available for faculty professional development. It provides a template, using the handbook as a text, for developing outcomes, plans,

assessments, etc. We also have the SLAC Handbook for faculty available to aid them in putting together program outcomes, curriculum maps, and assessment plans.

Further information on Process Improvement efforts can be found in section 4.A.1.

Criterion 4.B.4. – Teaching/Learning/Evaluation/Improvement - Assessment Process and Participation (Categories 1.1 Common Learning Outcomes and 1.2 Program Learning Outcomes)

Delta College demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through the ongoing assessment of student learning. This is accomplished through two academic committees, SLAC and GECAC. Committee composition incudes faculty from each of the five divisions, the Dean of Teaching and Learning, and a representative from Institutional Research (IR).

The College's SLAC and GECAC work cooperatively in assessing student learning. The SLAC chair has been diligent in tracking all outcomes, including General Education, in all college programs, thereby ensuring that all programs include all required components of General Education in addition to their program specific outcomes. The inclusion of all outcomes in the program curricula is also verified in the Curriculum Council processes. Assessment of the attainment of the outcomes is a two-fold process. GECAC assesses the attainment of Gen Ed outcomes in a wide distribution of classes across college programs, while SLAC assesses the attainment of program outcomes.

SLAC reviews all course and program outcomes and objectives submitted for Curriculum Council review. It ensures outcomes are measurable and aligned with the appropriate level of learning: Introductory (I), Practice (P), or Mastery (M) in the program curriculum map. The IPM categories are also embedded in GECAC documents.

GECAC provides oversight for assessment of the six general education outcomes: 1) think critically, 2) communicate effectively, 3) think civically, 4) cultivate wellness, 5) utilize technology effectively, and 6) reason quantitatively. In order to accomplish this, assignments from general education courses are audited to ensure that all AA and AS students will have documented learning in the six general education outcomes.

Assessment of student learning outcomes is achieved through SLAC and GECAC and that information is well documented. However, we are aware that we need to implement process mapping to ensure that lessons learned from assessment activity in both committees is consistently documented and implemented in next steps. We are aware that we still need to "close the loop" in our assessment cycle. In other words, we are have mastered the "plan" and "do" of plan-do-check-act cycle. We are just beginning consistently "check" of the data. We have to link the check and act steps through process mapping to be more consistent acting on the lessons learned.

Criterion 5.A.1. – Resources - Facilities and Technology (Category 5.2 Resource Management)

Currently, Delta's annual budget includes a transfer of $2 million from the General Fund to the Plant Fund for future capital expenditures. The current appraised value of college buildings and equipment is $291 million. The College must ensure that existing facilities are maintained and the value of the capital investment be preserved. When searching for an external benchmarking standard, the Building Research Council recommends an annual life cycle replacement allocation of 2% to 4% of the asset value to fund routine maintenance and capital renewal. Using the midpoint of 3% would result in an allocation of $8.73 million annually.

The Board of Trustees philosophy leads the College's use of funds for capital improvements, with no debt having been incurred to accomplish the tasks needed. Rather, the College saves ahead, then spends on large projects as they are needed. Further information can be found in a separate narrative document on Delta's facilities planning, budgeting and benchmarking.

Two cross-functional college teams perform key functions as part of the annual budget process, including review and recommendations of technology needs. First is the IMET (Instructional Materials, Equipment and Technology) committee, which receives technology budget requests from all of the academic divisions for review and prioritization. The second team is the IT Council.

Delta, Ellucian and the IT Council use data and benchmarks during the creation of its annual plans. Points of comparison include the use of environmental scans and facilitated group assessments, as well as national perspectives offered by Ellucian, based upon their numerous educational campus clientele.

Improvements in the process over the past few years include adjusting the timing of the Strategic Plan development and a more effective prioritization of resources, which is reflected on the IT Project Request Flow chart. Plans are for future efforts to continue improvements and to increase the frequency of reviews by the teams that influence each focus area.

In 2019, the College's external financial audit firm also conducted an IT audit. The result led to a recommendation that Delta improve its overall data security by developing a comprehensive approach to the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) compliance. That 1999 U.S. congressional law is also known as the Financial Services Modernization Act and replaced Glass-Steagall Act of 1933. Delta College developed a holistic annual five-point plan in response to these findings and presented it to the auditing firm. They agree these efforts will ensure compliance with all GLBA requirements and expressed appreciation that Delta advanced an approach that dealt with more items than just basic compliance.

Further information can be found in a separate narrative document on information technology planning, budgeting and benchmarking.

Criterion 5.A.2. – Resources - Educational Purposes (Category 5.3 Operational Effectiveness)

Delta College has purchased and installed the 25Live Room Scheduling software, which is now used college-wide. When it was determined that some faculty and staff were unaware of the database's benefits, efforts were made in 2019 to improve awareness and utilization of this system. A quick reference flyer was created that communicated what the system does, how to use it, and where to find support. Efforts are also in process by the system administrator to reduce delays and increase team awareness by developing a request wizard – ensuring relevant questions are asked, answers collected to maximize preparation efficiencies. Also, key performance indicator (KPI) measures are being developed to analyze utilization and trends. This involves working with the vendor and other colleges to establish long-term comparison opportunities.

In terms of a Learning Management System (LMS), Delta College utilizes Brightspace Desire2Learn (D2L). The eLearning team manages this secure, stable online learning environment, available to faculty and students. A formal review of LMS systems in 2019 concluded that our current vendor provided the best fit and functionality for the needs of Delta College and our online learning needs. That review used a rubric that collected data and summarized the results prior to finalizing the LMS selection, under a three-year contract.

The factors considered in this decision were: student and faculty ease of use, features and tools to aid faculty in delivering high quality instruction; features best for management/administration, ease of the eLearning office to create, modify, and assist in maintaining course sites; and integration/communication with other college software systems such as student registration. The three semi-final vendors provided Delta with a 'sandbox' (test site) and temporary accounts so that the review team members could get 'hands on' testing of the LMS.

Criterion 5.A.5. – Resources - Budgeting and Monitoring (Category 5.2 Resource Management)

Delta College's annual budget process begins after fall enrollment data is available. The Vice President of Business and Finance leads the annual budget process, who, along with the College Controller, develop an initial budget model. The draft budget begins with the prior year's actual revenues and expenditures of the General Fund along with the development of an enrollment projection, which is done by analyzing the prior years' outcomes for Delta College.

The President appoints members to Budget Cabinet annually, with broad representation from across campus and from all employee groups – administrative, faculty, professional, support and union. Further information can be found in a separate narrative document on the annual budget development process.

Delta has a College Dashboard with resources to aid in decision making related to budgeting, as well as enrollment management issues. The reports utilized most frequently for budgeting enrollment projections are the Budget/Credit Hour Report and Enrollment Reports. Data indicates that enrollment declines have been significant at Delta College for the past ten years. IR supplies leadership with retention analysis reports and other data they

have compiled on current results of the College's population. The IR team is actively planning a replacement of the analytics dashboard for reporting. Along with Ellucian staff, team members are attending demonstrations of possible software modules from Colleague or MicrosoftBI. This replacement would increase access to relevant data.

The College is subject to an annual financial statement audit on all Funds of the College, the College's Foundation and its Public Broadcasting stations. The annual audit results for the last five years provide an unmodified opinion, no management comments, or questioned costs. Although required by law, due to its receipt of federal funding, Delta College embraces this external audit process. It provides management, including the Board of Trustees, with an independent CPA's opinion about whether the financial statements present fairly the entity's financial position. The audit process improves internal control over financial reporting and provides reliable annual operating results to use for developing internal goals and targets.

Further information can be found in a separate narrative document on the daily and monthly fiscal monitoring activities that occur.

Criterion 5.B.2. – Governance and Admin. Structures - Leadership (Category 4.3 Leadership)

Wages and fringe benefits related to staffing are the largest component of Delta College's General Fund budget and represent 77% of the annual costs. Each year, as the new budget is developed, we need to determine all contractual obligations to reflect in the base budget model.

In February 2019, the administration proposed and the Board of Trustees approved a voluntary Employee Severance Plan (ESP), offering the opportunity for full-time faculty and staff to choose to retire or separate from the College, in exchange for a financial payout. This decision was intended to quickly reduce annual compensation costs, which hadn't been addressed as enrollment dropped.

The Board of Trustees received an update on the outcome of the Employee Severance Plan at its May 2019 meeting. The Vice President of Business and Finance estimated this change would save $3.1 million annually in the General Fund. Further information can be found in a separate narrative document, which details the Employee Severance Plan.

Delta College has a Reserve Policy related to its Fund Balance. It is a long-term goal of the College to attain a fund balance in the General Fund of 10% of its operating budget. This long-term goal is reviewed and evaluated at least every five years, with the next evaluation to be in the fiscal year ending 2020. The Board of Trustees has indicated that the fund balance will be to help cover three possibilities: catastrophic, operational, and for liquidity. In addition, the fund balance will allow the College sufficient working capital and cash flow for daily financial needs. The Trustees have indicated that fund balances should not be used for operating expenses.

The College also transfers $2 million annually from its General Fund operating budget to the Plant Fund reserves. This has allowed the College to accomplish renovations and capital projects without bonding. The general philosophy of the College has been to issue debt only when a very compelling case can be made. Delta College remains one of the only community colleges in Michigan to remain debt free, with no bond obligations for its construction projects.

Strict adherence to its Fund Balance and Plant Fund Reserves policies over the decades has allowed the College to have enough cash on hand to provide the required 50% match for capital projects. Recently, the State of Michigan approved $6.5 million to build a new Downtown Saginaw Center and Delta College could immediately provide its matching share of $6.5 million. The facility opened in June 2019. Additionally, when the Delta College Foundation raised $9.1 million from private funders, the College was able to provide the remaining $3.4 million in order to build a new Downtown Midland Center (now under construction).

Criterion 5.B.3. – Governance and Admin. Structures – Academic Policies & Processes (Category 4.3 Leadership)

Oversight of resources and managing spending, among other factors, leads Delta College to its long record of operational effectiveness. Through its inclusive Budget Cabinet process, a clear picture of the College's financial health can be shared with employee groups across campus. The annual budget model is built from the beginning upon the foundation of the Strategic Plan. This document is reviewed at the beginning of the financial process to determine what new or changing allocations need to be built in the model for the following year.

Leadership of the budget process is the responsibility of the Vice President of Business and Finance, who works closely with the President and the Board of Trustees when reviewing and reporting financial figures. As the plan is built, Delta College's Executive Council reviews along with the President's Cabinet, the priority list of items that are new for purchasing. This follows an initial prioritization, completed by the Budget Cabinet.

Delta College has many auxiliary departments, however two are worth highlighting, since they perform internal and external benchmarking – its Foundation and its Public Broadcasting stations. An annual analysis is performed of the Foundation and Public Broadcasting's results to determine the level of success, including numeric comparisons in multiple categories showing year-to-year trends. Results are measured in the amount of dollars contributed and pledged annually. This information is then compared to the annual CASE VSE survey results from other high-performing community college foundations, to identify possible improvements. Broadcasting staff members benchmark against other NPR and PBS stations, following their annual survey submitted to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). Further information on these two auxiliary operations is available for review:

- Delta College Foundation
- Delta College Public Broadcasting's stations – WDCQ-TV and WUCX-FM

Criterion 5.D.1. – Performance Improvement – Evidence of Performance (Category 6.2 Culture of Quality)

Delta College holistically approaches continuous quality improvement (CQI), ensuring that every level of the organization is committed to growth and learning. The strategic planning process and institutional action projects guide CQI efforts at the institutional level, while at the departmental level each area supports that plan.

Cross-functional teams, such as our Alliance for Innovation & Transformation (AFIT) (formerly Continuous Quality Improvement Network [CQIN]) team and Presidential Task Forces, which focus on improvements in specific areas of the College, bridge the divide between departments to foster intra-organizational collaboration in support of the strategic plan. At the individual level, employees meet with their supervisors to set goals that align with the plan and supervisors track those goals through a performance management system.

Criterion 5.D.2. – Performance Improvement – Learns from Experience (Category 6.2 Culture of Quality)

A key component of Delta's ability to learn from its operational experience has been the sharing of lessons learned through all-college forums, senate meetings, student success reports at Board meetings and trustee action reports, all of which occur monthly. Additionally, the Center for Organizational Success (COS) and Faculty Center for Teaching Excellence (FCTE) both offer frequent opportunities to share or learn about the knowledge developed through our many years of experience.

As stated above, the Strategic Plan has specific institutional action projects, which are tactical in nature. They include a baseline and goals. Champions from the leadership team guide the action projects but it takes teams to accomplish the goals. The team collects data throughout the project and reports the results in the "mid-year" update. The College has developed a chart to reflect the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) steps, which help the institution gain operational experience through the planning process.

In addition, the champion reports out at the Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Steering Committee meeting. At that time, action projects may be modified or even closed based upon the progress made. Next steps are then discussed by the Strategic Planning "sub-group" and a new project is written to continue to move the College toward success in the strategic focus area with a goal of achieving the results desired in the specified "Indicator of Success."