Seminole State College - OK

HLC ID 1638

OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review   Review Date: 2/24/2020

Dr. Lana Reynolds
President

Gigi Fansler
HLC Liaison

Michael Boyd
Review Team Chair

Neil Pagano
Federal Compliance Reviewer

Kristina Binard
Team Member

Lynn Bradman
Team Member

David Fleming
Team Member

Moira Lafayette
Team Member

Context and Nature of Review

Review Date

2/24/2020
Mid-Cycle Reviews include:

- The Year 4 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Biennial Review for Applying institutions

Reaffirmation Reviews include:

- The Year 10 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Review for Initial Candidacy for Applying institutions
- The Review for Initial Accreditation for Applying institutions
- The Year 4 Review for Standard Pathway institutions that are in their first accreditation cycle after attaining initial accreditation

Scope of Review

- Reaffirmation Review
- Federal Compliance (if applicable)
- On-site Visit
- Multi-campus Visit (if applicable)

There are no forms assigned.

Institutional Context

Seminole State College is a public community college that was established in 1931. It is located in Seminole, Oklahoma, which is a community with a population of 7500. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education has authorized SSC to provide general education and other university-parallel coursework, technical-occupational education, remedial education, formal and informal programs to serve community needs for continuing education, programs of institutional research, special support and activity programs to assist and enrich student's educational experience, and programs of economic development. The college offers nearly 40 degree or certificate programs to approximately 1600 students in Hughes, Lincoln, Okfuskee, Pottawatomie, and Seminole counties.

Interactions with Constituencies

Meeting Participants HLC Site Visit to Seminole State College Seminole, Oklahoma

HLC Site Visit Team (4)

Administrative Council Members:

President

Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs

Vice President for Student Affairs

Vice President for Fiscal Affairs

Director of Human Resources

Director of Community Relations

Director of Information Technology

Executive Assistant to the President

Faculty Senate President

Academic Degree Program and General Education Review:

Vice President for Academic Affairs

Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs

Social Sciences Division Chair

Nursing and Health Sciences Division Chair

Language Arts and Humanities Division Chair

STEM Division Chair

Business and Education Division Chair

Faculty Representatives of Academic Divisions

Social Sciences Professor

Social Sciences Professor

Business and Education Assistant Professor

Business and Education Assistant Professor

STEM Assistant Professor

STEM Assistant Professor

Language Arts and Humanities Assistant Professor

Language Arts and Humanities Associate Professor

Physical Therapy Assistant Program Director

Medical Laboratory Technician Program Director

Admission/Registrar

Advising

Title III Director

Title III

Title III Advising

Title IX Director

Accreditation Liaison Officer/Coordinator of Accreditation

Student Success Council (9)

Assessment Committee Members (18)

Board of Regents (4)

Open Forum on Criteria 1&2 – faculty, staff, students (69)

Open Forum on Criteria 3&4 – faculty, staff, students (68)

Open Forum on Criterion 5 – faculty, staff, students (56)

Retirees (2)

Academic Affairs Administrative Assistant

Human Resources Director

Registrar

ALO/Coordinator of Accreditation

SSC Police Chief

Sponsored Programs Compliance Officer

Distance Education Committee (10)

Information Technology Staff (5)

Faculty (50+)

Students (5)

SSC Educational Foundation Trustees (2)

Additional Documents

There are no additional documents reviewed.

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Rating

Met

Rationale

SSC's mission statement features prominently on its website and states that the college "empowers people for academic success, personal development, and lifelong learning." This is a statement clearly suited to the nature of a two-year public college as indicated by the college's function statement, core values, and strategic plan. These statements were first adopted in December of 1999 and revised in 2010 and again in 2019. Official minutes from the August 15th, 2019, meeting of the Board of Regents includes an affirmation of the current mission statement, core values, and function of Seminole State College. These minutes serve as validation that the mission statement is adopted by the governing board.

SSC's response provides clear evidence that its programs, support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission. For example, the college provides general education, technical-occupational education, remedial education, support programs, enrichment programs, and programs to support economic development in SSC's service region. Review of the college's credit division catalog indicates that degree and certificate programs are aligned with SSC's mission. Further, the SSC Help Center provides students with access to a comprehensive array of support services, and a Student Handbook is available to ensure that students are aware of these resources. Likewise, the website provides clear information about community programs. IPEDs data included in the assurance argument demonstrate that SSC's enrollment profile is consistent with its mission, and this was validated during the site visit in conversation with current students.

SSC's planning and budgeting processes begin with consideration of priorities identified in the Strategic Plan, and a review of the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Proposal shows alignment with the institution's mission statement. Appropriate portions of total revenue are allotted for instruction and

student support. Discussions with various constituents during the site visit demonstrated that allocation of resources is occurring in alignment with strategic planning and informed by data and other valid measures of performance. All participants in the site visit indicated that needs are being met through the budgeting and planning process; however, there were suggestions that additional resources may be allocated to expand online programming.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Rating

Met

Rationale

A number of documents articulate SSC's mission and priorities; these documents include the mission statement, core values, function statement, strategic plan, institutional beliefs and commitments, vision statement, and general education outcomes statement. SSC uses the student handbook, the faculty handbook, and the college catalog as the primary means of ensuring that these statements are available to public stakeholders. These statements are also made in course syllabi and on the college's website. While evidence is clear that the mission is articulated publicly, evidence can be strengthened to demonstrate how SSC informs prospective students of the college's mission.

SSC's administrative council and Board of Regents updated the mission statement as a result of the college's accreditation self-study in 2009. Since this time, the mission is reviewed annually as the college updates various documents which include the mission statement. The many statements which are in place to explain the college's mission are also reviewed regularly, and SSC's assurance argument includes clear evidence to document each of these statements. For example, SSC's Policy Manual includes a Function Statement which alludes to the role that the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education play in establishing the scope for SSC's mission documents.

SSC's Policy Manual includes important statements that identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the college's programs. For example, the Function Statement indicates that the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education identifies the nature, scope, and intended constituents. Evidence is clear that SSC understands its function and articulates it clearly and publicly in mission documents.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Rating

Met

Rationale

SSC cites its Core Value of Compassion as an indicator of its commitment to address the college's role in a multicultural society, and the operational definition of this core value specifically notes diversity and globalism. Other mission documents address commitment to diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. Further, the college's general education outcomes include a goal to address diversity of society in an appropriate manner. Conversations with all constituents during the on-site visit validated the college's commitment to its core value of Compassion.

In providing evidence for this area, SSC cites its mission documents as proof of institutional commitment to diversity. While it is appropriate to suggest institutional attention to human diversity, the emphasis on processes and activities could be strengthened in this response. The college notes entries in the college catalog which emphasize attention to human diversity in the curricula as well as the important support services available in the college's student services center, and these activities provide some assurance that SSC meets this criterion. While other very good evidence is provided (e.g. global studies trips and a partnership with College360), these programs may only impact 21 students and 4 faculty members. The college also cites student organizations, but the assurance argument does not make it clear how these organizations address diversity of society.

Clearer evidence of SSC's commitment to the college's role in a multicultural society was obtained during the on-site review where faculty, staff, administrators, and students talked about various initiatives and college programs that address diversity and multiculturalism. One strong indicator of this commitment involves programs supported through the college's Native American-Serving Non Tribal Institute (NASNTI) program. SSC's NASNTI program supports outreach efforts, engagement in the community, faculty/staff development, and student support services.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Rating

Met

Rationale

SSC cites its cultural events, exhibits, and concerts which are open to the general public as indicators of its obligation to serve the public. There is also clear evidence that SSC opens its facilities to community organizations as appropriate and plays a convening role in initiating, facilitating, and sustaining regional economic development efforts in partnership with the Rural Business and Resource Center, for example. This evidence was validated during the on-site visit, and reviewers toured spaces where community partners and local organizations convene on the college's campus.

As a public college in Oklahoma, SSC operates as a member of a coordinating board of control called the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) which was created in 1941 by an amendment to the state's constitution. According to its website, OSRHE "prescribe[s] academic standards of higher education, determine[s] functions and courses of study at state colleges and universities, grant[s] degrees, and approve[s] each public college's and university's allocations, as well as tuition and fees within the limits set by the Oklahoma legislature." SSC's assurance argument makes clear its role within the system controlled by OSRHE, and the college provides clear evidence that educational responsibilities take primacy over all other purposes.

SSC's Business and Industry Program is well documented in Section V of the college's catalog; this program offers "prompt and specific training for local business and industry needs through courses at both traditional and nontraditional times and offers hands-on training for companies of all sizes using the latest technology and techniques." The same section of the catalog also describes the college Community Service program which offers noncredit activities and workshops aimed at enrichment. For example, the college facilitates learning related to photography, cake decorating, creative writing, real estate, and physical exercise. Course descriptions in this area represent appropriate methods for engaging communities of interest and responding to needs in alignment with the college's mission. SSC also includes in its assurance argument a list of partnership group which represents appropriate external constituencies. Throughout the site visit, multiple SSC employees spoke about the college's important role in the community it serves and the level of support the college enjoys as a result of this strong partnership.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Rationale

Clear and ample evidence is in place to demonstrate that SSC meets expectations for Criterion #1. While evidence provided in the assurance argument could be stronger for sub-component 1.C, reviewers were able to identify additional evidence during discussions and conversations with various constituents to ensure that the college is meeting expectations in this area.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Seminole State College operates with institutional integrity as demanded by federal law and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Annual independent audits reflect fiscal integrity. Board Policies are clearly delineated per Oklahoma state law. Many of the areas related to fiscal oversight appear simplified for SSC by the nature of their institution: bonds, for instance, are owned by "various agencies within the State of Oklahoma." Auxiliary functions are "internal functions," so SSC applies the same standards and practices to those functions as all others. With the complexities brought on by being chartered by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, SSC's adherence to standards of integrity, especially fiscally, are dictated by state mandate. Other policies for fair and ethical behavior reflect best practices in higher education, especially in the areas covered by human resources (hiring and training, for example).

The processes SSC documents for maintaining integrity also reflect best practices. In terms of budget, decisions come up through the organization in explicit ways, starting with a documented Sample Budget Request Form, which is then moved vertically through the organization to the three SSC Vice Presidents. Academic Integrity can clearly be shown through the applicable processes for verifying faculty credentials, assigning tenure, for protecting free speech, and for supporting professional development. Discussions during the site visit confirmed that SSC appears to be operating with integrity in all functions. The college also cites numerous annual reports mandated by OSRHE as evidence of integrity in operations. Examples provided include well-documented processes driving budget development, annual independent audits by a third party firm, program review policy, tenure policy, academic freedom policy, hiring procedures, personnel policy, security reports, and various other artifacts.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Seminole State College generally presents itself to its constituents through its website, which also includes a stamp of accreditation. The academic catalog presents information that allows students, or potential students, to see the big picture related to attending SSC. Program information, admissions-related information, tuition and costs, faculty and staff listing are available on the website. Discussions with SSC employees during the on-site visit indicated that the college is considering improvements to its website, which will improve how students interact with information and will enhance evidence that the college is meeting Core Component 2.B.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The governing board of SSC is an entity born out of the larger Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education, which contextualizes the autonomy and integrity of the SSC Board. The governing board's interactions with the administration and faculty in terms of decision-making are documented well by agendas, minutes and supplemental materials (such as Powerpoint presentations) from all meetings. The minutes reflect conversations that allow the Board to focus on the college's priorities.

Deliberations seem appropriate to the role of the Board as overseer of SSC's reasonable and relevant interests, including decisions about new programs, academic partnerships, creation of additional sports programs, and the regular review of the president for potential rehire. The meeting minutes reflect an open agenda welcoming information from internal stakeholders (the faculty senate, college administrators and students) especially, but also from external stakeholders.

As determined by Oklahoma's State Regents of Higher Education, the SSC Board is governed by well-established policies regarding expectations of the Board members, their operating procedures, and their delegation of authority to the college president. Because appointment of Board members come directly from the governor, with advice and consent from the State Senate, and consists of seven members with overlapping terms, the Board balances a constant changing of the Board along with the stability of having board members for 7 years. This set-up provides some safeguard against political influence as governors and other elected officials come and go. There is no indication of undue influence from donors.

By following applicable open meeting acts, the college ensures their adherence to Board policy that explicitly grants the college president full authority to manage the day-to-day operations of the college. For instance, Executive leadership are the only positions in the organization that the Board has any role in hiring. In general, the practices and processes by which the Board governs the college reflect the expected integrity of SSC.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

Seminole State College has established at the highest level some basic standards related to their commitment to freedom of expression. Their Student Bill of Rights and Responsibility delineates multiple ways a student's freedom of expression is protected. Likewise SSC has a very thorough Academic Freedom policy (called "Expressive Activity") that protects the essential value of academic expression. Their Ethics Policy also protects individual rights in relation to expression. The college's commitment to the Pursuit of Truth became evident during open forum discussions with faculty, staff, and students during the on-site visit. Institutional principles and activities related to providing students an in-depth array of experiences capture the complexity of truth at the heart of a higher education institution.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The college's overall approach to responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by faculty and staff aligns appropriately with what most other community colleges do. Professional development funds are available through a faculty-led process for faculty and staff for basic or applied research. Through its participation in TRIO and NASNTI grants, SSC ensures that a regular schedule of faculty and staff development is available related to applied research for student learning and success (such as transformational learning). The human resources department also develops regular training that relates to scholarly practice as apropos of a community college, as well as manages continuing education opportunities with applicable salary increases per a "Salary Schedule."

Seminole State College has taken very proactive approaches to guiding students through the nuances of academic honesty, integrity and overall responsible scholarship. Academic dishonesty, generally plagiarism, is explained in multiple places for students: catalog, student handbook, course syllabi, library assistance, tutoring resources, and in specific classes, such as Learning Strategies, Composition and Nursing courses.

In addition to plagiarism, SSC policies on academic honesty and integrity include clearly articulated information on academic suspension, satisfactory academic progress (SAP) for financial aid, including language about suspension, probation, and academic appeals. This information can be found in both the College Catalog and Student Handbook. SSC also references an Ethics Policy to ensure ethics in the classroom (instructional activities).

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Rationale

SSC upholds all of the appropriate standards of ethical and responsible conduct that one should expect from an institution of higher education. From the Board of Regents through the Administration to the faculty, staff, and students, the institution has all of the policies and procedures in place to act with integrity.

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

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

All SSC courses are current and require levels of performance appropriate to the associate degree or certificate. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (ORSHE) ensure that the general education courses are equivalent across the state based on a Course Equivalency Project (CEP). Faculty participate in meetings across the state to ensure the courses meet the common learning outcomes. When a course is developed at SSC, it is approved at the division chair level and then the Administrative Council Level before going to the OSRHE for final approval. This process was discussed in the open forums with faculty and division chairs. In addition, all courses use a common syllabus and a general education core is needed for all degrees. When students enter SSC, they are required to meet with an advisor who will discuss placement options. As described by faculty and staff, SSC has a Transitional Education program that allows students who place below the college-level to take math and English with a co-requisite. Students who place below the Transitional level are advised into a full load of classes designed to assist them in completing and being ready for the next level. According to the Continued Enrollment Policy, students are required to earn a 2.0 each semester to continue. If they drop below a 1.7 during the first 30 credits they go on probation and this limit goes up to 1.9 after 30 credits. Students expressed their support from faculty and staff toward completion.

SSC offers 17 AA and AS degrees, 5 AAS degrees, and 2 certificates. All degrees and certificates outline at least one of the four student learning goals and these are listed on the syllabi. During open sessions with faculty, the process of aligning the learning goals with the courses was discussed and students who attended the open session also confirmed that the goals are clearly stated on the syllabus. In addition to discipline-specific advisors, each degree has a Degree Program Mentor who

is a liaison with the advisor and student regarding their program of study. The Degree Program Mentors assist with articulation agreements for both transfer and CTE degrees.

The team met with the SSC Assessment Team, Divisional Chairs, Faculty representatives, staff, and students regarding the continuity of program quality and learning goals for all courses regardless of delivery. The team heard clearly that courses taught in the same discipline are reviewed to make sure the learning goals are the same. In addition, across modality, courses are taught similarly regardless of Zoom, face to face, online or dual enrollment. One example from faculty was that Zoom courses are recorded for consistency. A student shared that she had taken courses in different modalities and all used similar outcomes. The SSC Assessment Team consists of a faculty rep from each academic division along with other staff and they shared the process to review the college's Course-Embedded Assessment (CEA) reports. Students are required to have the same number of contact hours regardless of delivery.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The degrees offered at SSC are appropriate to their mission and function statements which state that SSC will offer courses for academic, personal, and lifelong learning (Mission Statement) and that SSC will provide university-parallel course-work, technical-occupational education, remedial education, continuing education, and programs to provide economic development (Function Statement). To this end, SSC offers 17 AA and AS transferable degrees, 5 AAS technical-occupational degrees and 2 certificates designed specifically for economic advancement. All transfer degrees require 42 core general education requirements, and the AAS degrees require 19-21 general education credit hours. All of these courses are approved by OSRHE. In addition, the technical-occupational programs are developed with input from advisory committees, business and industry and other technical college partners to make sure they are meeting the needs of the industry partners. The technical-occupational courses are taught specifically toward the certification exams in all five-degree areas. The process for both the general education course approval and technical occupational course approval was shared with the team during open sessions with faculty and the SSC Assessment Team.

SSC has four general education outcomes that were established by the faculty through the SSC Assessment Team and the OSRHE CEP process. The four outcomes are designed to broaden students' understanding of communication, critical thinking, the value of a global society, and the role of history, cultural arts, and science in civilization. As discussed in the meeting with the SSC

Assessment Team as well as the open forum, every course is designed to teach at least one of these general education goals. Faculty confirmed that every degree-seeking student would be taught in all four general education outcomes. In addition, the college has mapped this out on the General Education Outcomes Matrix located on the college's website under the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

The degree programs at SSC engage students in scholarly work as described by faculty in the forums. Faculty shared examples of student learning in the Composition I course which requires students to utilize research methods and understand inquiry, and students in art courses who need to apply their creativity outside of the classroom. The team was able to see several buildings on campus and the theater included a student art exhibit. The general education philosophy and program outcomes are designed to prepare students for a global society and workforce.

SSC recognizes the importance of human and cultural diversity in several ways. In addition to their general education outcomes, one of their core values is compassion. Members of the college shared stories of how the value of compassion has impacted them when working with students and accepting a position at SSC. Faculty discussed how human and cultural diversity is taught in the classroom and staff discussed how it is encompassed in the services provided. Out of the 255 courses offered at the college, 138 meet general education outcome 3 on global society and 130 meet outcome 4 related to civilization. These are also mapped out on the college's website. In addition, the college offers Global Studies courses where students and faculty have had an opportunity to travel to Denmark to learn about the culture and attend courses.

SSC faculty and students have an opportunity to contribute and grow in their scholarly work. Faculty are supported in attending conferences for professional development and both faculty and staff have an opportunity for tuition reimbursement for advanced degrees. The college has implemented a transformative learning model in math, English and science, and faculty have had an opportunity to attend training to implement these learning practices in their classroom. The college has redesigned the remedial education model based on research and professional development. Students have opportunities to be involved on and off campus. One faculty member talked about providing space off-campus for students to work on art projects. A local Board of Regents member talked about students volunteering at the children's museum. Several student leaders discussed support for leadership opportunities off campus and throughout the state.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

According to the faculty, staff, and students throughout the visit, SSC has sufficient faculty to serve the institution. The team did notice that many faculty served in multiple roles which is typical of a community college. However, there has been a reduction in force due to budget constraints. In one forum when asked if the institution could change anything, adding additional faculty was mentioned. Faculty serve as advisors, Degree Program Mentors, OSRHE CEP reps, serve on the Assessment Committee and are seen by students as always available. The faculty shared that they are responsible for curriculum, assessment, student performance review, faculty credentialing, and co-curricular learning. SSC faculty are able to handle all of these responsibilities and show true commitment to the students.

The team verified that all faculty are qualified to teach regardless of modality or location. The college has been working on a Faculty Credentials Screening form to formalize the process of equivalency experience, a form that resides in the office of the VPAA. This process would assist the college if there were a need to evaluate alternative methods (e.g. tested experience or equivalent experience) for determining faculty qualifications. The VPAA then maintains an Excel spreadsheet that captures the course by course credentials of each faculty. The VPAA did confirm that all transfer faculty including those teaching dual enrollment have the required credentials. During the on-site visit, reviewers sampled faculty credential files and verified this claim.

According to SSC Policy 11-6-2, division chairs complete an evaluation on each faculty. These

evaluations are shared with the VPAA. The division chairs and faculty in the open forums confirmed that this was occurring each year. In addition, students complete a student course evaluation form at the end of each semester and students confirmed that this was anonymous and that they shared honest feedback. In addition to the SSC policy, the Faculty Handbook also includes information about the evaluation of both full-time faculty and adjunct. New adjunct are evaluated during their first year, and a jump drive with all instructional materials is also shared with the new faculty as well at semester in-services.

According to SSC faculty, they have opportunities for professional development. The Faculty Senate Professional Development Committee reviews all applications for professional development which are submitted each fall semester and tries to accommodate as many faculty as possible. Many faculty shared that they have been able to attend at least one conference each year. In addition, faculty shared that even during budget cuts, professional development was supported. In addition to supporting faculty through conferences, faculty and staff also have the opportunity for tuition reimbursement and possible pay increases based on educational attainment. Grants secured by the college have also allowed for an increase in professional development through training on learning styles and teaching practices. One example is the NASNTI grant which has held several trainings for faculty around transformative learning strategies.

During the open forums, faculty and students shared that faculty are available to students. Several students shared experiences of faculty emailing them quickly about a question or being available during their office hours. Faculty also serve as advisors and Degree Program Mentors. The team heard lots of support regarding faculty commitment to student success.

The team met with the Student Services division which includes recruitment, testing, admissions, registrar, advising, athletics, campus safety, disability support, several TRIO grants, the NASNTI grant, and residence life. Student Financial Aid reports to the VP for Fiscal Affairs, but the team also met with the director on several occasions. The staff are qualified for their areas and receive ongoing training for financial aid, veterans, international students, recruitment, retention, as well as general professional development in student affairs. According to the staff, they are supported by the VP of Student Affairs to develop professionally. In addition, it was shared that staff have an opportunity for tuition reimbursement regardless of classification and are supported to continue their education.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

The team met with the student services staff both as a division as well as through open forums. According to the assurance argument, SSC has several student support services including academic labs, writing labs, Student Support Services, STEM Student Support Services, ADA and Veteran's assistance, and additional tutoring and support through the NASNTI grant, which serves Native American students as well as other students as needed. In addition, SSC recently opened a Food Pantry and started a referral center for mental health. All of these services were developed to assist the student population at SSC, and the last two were identified by faculty, staff, and students as a need for the student population based on student feedback. During sessions with staff and faculty, it was clear that the value of compassion was in action at SSC. Everyone talked about helping students. Based on the programs outlined in the argument and discussed with staff and students, SSC is meeting the needs of the student populations.

A signature program for SSC is the Transitional Education Program for college readiness. Students who place into remedial math or English are placed in a co-requisite course to move them through the remedial sequence more quickly but also with more academic support. SSC has seen an improvement in retention after moving to this new model. Currently, students need an ACT score of at least 19 to place into college-level. Those who place below are enrolled in the Transitional Education Program. In addition, students can take college-level science if they are also enrolled in a co-requisite math course. Faculty are trained and were supportive of this new model. In addition to the Testing Center, Admissions and Advising also assist with this placement process.

SSC has a three-tiered model for academic advising, which was outlined in the assurance argument and shared in several open forums. When a student applies to SSC, they are asked to meet with an academic advisor in the enrollment services office. There are five academic advisors in this office,

and they assist the student with their first semester goals, including placement, personal, degree programs, etc. Once the student is enrolled in their program as well as their learning strategies course, they start meeting with their Returning Student Advisor (RSA). The RSA can be a faculty or staff member and there are approximately 25 RSAs across the college. RSAs are trained through the Academic Advising department. In addition, each degree program has a Degree Program Mentor, who is a faculty member in that discipline who understands the nuances of that degree. The DPM is a liaison to the RSA and student. This model was supported by the team while visiting SSC and also evident with their graduation rate of 39%, a statistic offered to the team by the faculty senate president.

The team had an opportunity to see several buildings throughout the campus including the Walkingstick Student Center, Student Union, Jeff Johnston Fine Arts center, Library, Student Support Services, Testing, Enrollment Services, and classrooms. In addition, the team heard from faculty, staff and students about support for technology to assist students in the classroom, including updating the science labs. When asked what SSC would need in the future, several facility examples were given including deferred maintenance. When team members met with the VPFA, he also addressed the need for facility maintenance and noted the development of a five-year plan. Overall, the college has the infrastructure to meet the needs of students.

According to faculty who teach Composition I, all degree-seeking students are required to take this course and are taught effective use of research. In addition, students are taught about information resources in the Learning Strategies Course, a course which is required for all students, including certificate programs. Based on conversations in the forum and with individual faculty, the team saw evidence that this is being met by the college.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Rating

Met

Rationale

SSC's assurance argument provides a comprehensive list of co-curricular opportunities available to students at the college, and these opportunities are appropriate to the institution's mission. Linked news articles seem to suggest that some of these co-curricular opportunities contribute to the educational experience of students; for example, student officers participated in a national leadership summit, and the college hosted a creativity symposium that included student participation.

The assurance argument makes the claim that co-curricular offerings "reinforce the college's mission and values and complement the formal curriculum." While the evidence provided indicates that the college does, in fact, support co-curricular activities, no evidence is provided in the assurance argument which serves to demonstrate that these activities accomplish this aim. Two artifacts are provided; however, the content of those artifacts describe activities in general terms rather than what was/is reinforced through student engagement with the activities. While evidence sufficiently verifies that co-curricular programs are in place and appropriate to the college's mission, SSC could have strengthened the evidence in the assurance argument specifically related to demonstrating claims made about the contributions of these co-curricular activities to student learning. Evidence was more apparent to reviewers during the on-site visit.

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment through several curricular and co-curricular activities. Several activities were discussed with faculty, staff, and students during the site visit. Faculty talked about the Global Studies Program, which includes opportunities for students and faculty to travel to different countries. Art faculty talked about opportunities to work on projects outside of the classroom and showcase artwork around campus. One of the SSC Regents shared the volunteer opportunities for students at the Children's Museum. The team met with student leaders who talked at length about their opportunities for co-curricular leadership which includes activities through the President's Leadership Class. In addition, the Nigh Student Leadership Program and New Women's Leadership programs are two state leadership programs where students have had an opportunity for additional leadership training. SSC has several clubs and organizations available to students including Phi Theta Kappa, Sigma Kappa Delta, and Student Government Association. Student athletes are active on campus and in the community. The college clearly outlined how they are providing enriched educational experiences through some

out-of-classroom opportunities for students and also shared how faculty and staff are involved.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Rationale

Overall, SSC meets all of the aspects of Criterion 3. The college demonstrated to the team their commitment to offering students a high-quality education based on general education outcomes and degree requirements set by the state. SSC has the faculty and staff necessary to support student success, and students have opportunities to learn and grow outside the classroom. Overall, the college supported the criterion through the assurance argument and evidence provided throughout the on-site visit.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Rating

Met

Rationale

SSC's policy II-7-2 stipulates that the goal of program review is to provide a tool for planning and budgeting which leads to appropriate and efficient use of state and institutional resources to meet the mission and goals of the college. This policy addressed the schedule and responsibilities of the institutional parties involved in compiling, reviewing and approving program reviews. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness web page lists the college's program reviews as evidence that the review process is in place. The college is required to submit a program review report on all programs every five years to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSHRE).   The program review template provides a framework for use in gathering program data and relevant program information. Discussion on site with the Assessment Committee members and members of the Institutional

Effectiveness committee confirmed for the review team that program reviews are submitted by faculty to the Division Chairs and the VP of Academic Affairs for review. Following review, feedback for corrective action, if any, is given by the Assessment Committee and submitted with an action plan to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

SSC's process for evaluating transcripted credit draws upon OSHRE's transfer credit policies and course equivalencies project (CEP) as guidance. The Admissions office reviews credits the college accepts in transfer. SSC admissions staff clarified that Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is reviewed and evaluated at the academic division level.

Guidelines and information on the process for awarding advanced standing, transfer and CLEP credit to prospective students is clearly documented on SSC's web site.

Course embedded assessments (CEA) are used for all courses. Course assessment data is collected to evaluate student learning across the curriculum and general education outcomes. The VP of Academic Affairs confirmed in on site discussions that all dual credit courses are taught by SSC faculty. Faculty credentials were reviewed on site as evidence that faculty are qualified to teach in their program areas.

SSC's most recent evaluation of general education outcomes using the ETS Proficiency Profile in the 2018-19 report should guide the Assessment of Student Learning Committee in advocating for resource allocation to support student tutoring resources.

Specialized accreditations are noted on SSC's website with the exception of the Physical Therapy Assistant AAS degree. The PTA program has Candidate of Accreditation status with the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) and is progressing towards accreditation.

SSC shows evidence of a process in place to track the academic success of graduates who transfer to four-year institutions. The recent transfer report shows the SSC transfer students' GPA increased over the span of the past 4 AYs in comparison to the four primary receiving institutions, which is indicative of the rigor of program and student learning outcomes at SSC. As SSC's Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator has identified, and as discussed on-site with student success staff, continued focus on degree completion of SSC transfer students is needed to determine what if any role SSC can play in increasing this rate.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Rating

Met

Rationale

SSC appears to have a well-defined process to assess student learning at multiple levels and values the use of course-level, general education level, and degree program-level assessment. SSC also uses engagement and satisfaction assessment data for institutional planning and resource allocation to support student learning. Discussions with faculty confirmed that comprehensive assessment practices are in place at the academic division level which ensures that results are shared with the Assessment Committee and Administrative Council for review.

SSC's General Education Outcomes include four clearly stated goals for learning which students are expected to demonstrate. These outcomes are stated clearly on the school's website and incorporated into program documents and course syllabi. Processes for assessment of student learning are based upon a set of fundamental questions (what are students learning, and how do we use this evidence to improve student learning?). Additionally, a document called "Assessment of Student Learning Procedure" provides comprehensive documentation of assessment procedures as five overlapping levels.

Reviewers note that SSC's approach to assessing its general education outcomes relies upon course-level embedded assessments (CEAs), and reviewers noted that the college continues to improve its general education assessment. Faculty stress the use of pre- and post-tests as methods for assessing student learning. Faculty also noted that thresholds and expectations are established at the level of the academic division. When the pre-set thresholds are not met, faculty develop an action plan based on assessment results as part of a continuous feedback loop that identifies new practices and teaching methods to improve student learning.

Co-curricular goals for student learning are not provided in the assurance argument. In discussion with faculty and staff, the review team learned that the college adopted a definition of co-curricular outcomes and then changed it again this past fall to create closer alignment with HLC's definition. SSC acknowledges its challenges in making claims for co-curricular programs, and they appear to be

committed to making significant improvements in this area. In fact, a sub-committee of the institutional assessment committee has already convened to identify goals and action plans.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

SSC employees reported to reviewers during the on-site visit that the college captures persistence and completion metrics on a regular basis and presents these performance measures on the Institutional Effectiveness website. Additionally, reviewers were able to find the webpage where these data are presented. During the on-site visit, various constituents reported to reviewers that the college has established targets of +3% increase in both retention and graduation until the level of 70% retention and 50% graduation is attained.

SSC's Institutional Sustainability goal focuses on enhancing enrollment growth through expansion of programming and in particular online programs as discussed during the on-site visit. The college is also investing in resources to support recruitment and retention of students. The Strategic Enrollment Plan includes goals and strategies to improve student onboarding that supports students from the point of enrollment to program completion. Supporting students with math and writing labs, tutoring and mentoring are identified as key to supporting success, persistence and retention. Monitoring the success of these strategies and using feedback on metrics will provide key information on the effectiveness of these strategies. SSC demonstrates evidence that the college is using data to make improvements; for example, the addition of a recruitment specialist and a Recruitment Plan will strengthen efforts to achieve success, persistence, and completion goals.

Data from the IPEDS survey indicates graduation rates over the past few years have been increasing. During the on-site visit, the VP of Academic Affairs acknowledged that the Assessment Committee discussed that the college has not used IPEDS data to the extent possible to benchmark against similar institutions to measure areas of improvement.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Rationale

SSC meets all the requirements for Criterion Four. Reviewers noted efforts to improve an already effective assessment program. For example, the Assessment Committee is considering methods for measuring attainment of general education outcomes beyond the use of course-embedded assessments. Additionally, assessment of co-curricular programs appears to be a priority for the Assessment Committee and the college. As these improvement efforts progress, evidence in the area of Criterion Four will also be strengthened.

5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Although SSC has recently experienced shortfalls in state funding, the college has been able to increase its tuition to help make-up the difference. Tuition has remained very affordable for students, maintained viability for the college, upheld its educational quality, and sustains the staff and faculty. SSC has utilized a deferred maintenance method to further manage costs under the shortfall. This appears to be monitored closely, and the 5-year plan for maintenance was reviewed during the visit.

The physical plant at SSC includes 17 buildings located on 84 acres which the college maintains and has sustainable plans for the students' needs as well as comfort in the educational environment. The technology resources of the college are up to date and include recent upgrade to its mainframe and web portal. Students can access their courses, transcripts, etc. through MYSCCOK which also functions as an early alert system for faculty and staff. The college also supports students and faculty through a Learning Management System, Brightspace. The college utilizes technology to efficiently allow students to access their financial aid awards and accept them online.

In addition to software SSC has used federal grants to upgrade computer labs and is currently

upgrading its wireless system for better access in more locations. SSC replaced an older analog phone system with VoIP and expanded its options for distance education, upgraded its LMS, and is working on the college's network infrastructure for improved security.

Across its functional areas, the college is focused and aligned with support of student learning and is compliant with Oklahoma State regulations. SSC utilizes program review, assessment, and its Strategic Plan decision filters to prioritize the fiscal needs of the college and ensure alignment with the SSC mission. In the area of distance education, specifically, the college makes sound fiscal decisions to support the strategic plan of growth via online education, including individual subscriptions to Quality Matters to provide a framework for the learning environment, and the college is also developing in-house training. Fiscal reports are externally audited to show compliance with stated institutional expectations thus avoiding inappropriate allocations.

As SSC implements the 2019-2022 strategic plans, it uses a set of decision filters against which it will evaluate its strategic priorities, goals, and initiatives. These include mission alignment, evidence and data, financial resource capacity, enrollment management, accountability, and buy- in. As stated, "The intention will be to use the Strategic Plan's Decision Filters to determine adding or expanding academic, athletic or activity-based programs to enhance enrollment and financial baselines." This is an effective method for ensuring that investment of human and financial resources are used to enhance the students' experience and student recruiting, persistence and completion. An outline of the method for evaluating plans and initiatives against the filters is needed. The use of the filters (like learning outcomes) is a powerful tool for establishing a feedback loop for further improvement and should be documented in a formal way such that the data is observable to stakeholders.

SSC faculty and staff credentials are documented and meet with established standards. In addition professional development seems a priority for SSC and also meets state and other institutional requirements along a variety of topics, including: technology in the classroom, online courses, 2+2 programs, state matrix workshops for transfer courses, Oklahoma Association of Community Colleges (OACC), Assessment of Student Learning, transitional education, program and curriculum planning, diversity training, and developing online courses. SSC offers tuition reimbursement program for faculty and staff working toward advanced degrees.

SSC has improved its wireless system and is continuously improving its online learning offerings with 55 courses. The college has plans to add 20 more courses by 2022. In addition, through conversations with the college, additional information concerning professional /personal development activities has become clear. These are often offered in an informal way to faculty, staff, students, etc. Also, their examples for faculty professional development have included training for faculty in Quality Matters, and training for the use of the college's LMS for teachers and especially for online teachers. Offerings in the areas of teaching methods and strategies, classroom management strategies, syllabus construction, objective writing, etc. are not evident in the written document but are evident in conversations with faculty members and trainers.

"SSC adheres to systematic allocation methods, which ensure financial resources, space utilization, technology, faculty and staff are allocated in an efficient and fair manner." Allocation methods are tied to its program review, assessment and strategic plan. Approval follows a hierarchical lineage with final submission to the state regents. External audits are performed to verify adherence to SSC's budgeting process and were made available for this review.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies— including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Rating

Met

Rationale

SSC's Board of Regents (BoR) is appointed by the Oklahoma State Governor. All of the regents represent different communities within SSC's service area. The seven-member board receives training on the institution according to SSC's Policy "regents educational program" which calls for 15 hours of regents education courses to include 8 hours of core education with 2 hours of ethics and 3 hours in higher education issues. The SSC Board meets with the president monthly to discuss business and other issues in need of clarification and further discourse. In addition, the Board of Regents reviews and approves purchases, financial reports, academic reports, policies, and audits.

Governance at SSC resides first with the BoR and the President and Vice Presidents. The BoR appropriately assigns the authority over decision making to the upper administration, faculty, staff and students, although not endowed with any decision making authority, certainly have recommendation power and are thus engaged in decision-making processes. Several committees are organized according to function and also have recommendation responsibilities. This hierarchy is often evident in higher education institutions and seems efficient. Some examples of the work and/or recommendations of the various non-decision making entities at SSC serve as good evidence of the system's soundness and fair-mindedness. A student government association is in place at SSC; however, reviewers were not able to determine the extent to which this association influenced decision making at the institutional level.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Learning assessment results are clearly the driver for resource allocation. Other resource allocations are based on an informal and formal evaluation process of observation, feedback, and needs assessment. For example, physical plant staff has developed a formal 5-year maintenance plan with action steps identified in the college's strategic plan (e.g. repair of parking lots, HVAC upgrades, and enhancement of wifi). The college realizes that program reviews are an important component of integrated planning and budgeting and that assessment of needs and provisioning of resources, requesting resources, and establishing partnerships are better served through a planned formal assessment process for co-curricular activities and areas of the college. The college has plans for developing a formal co-curricular assessment plan which would represent an improvement of current methods for integrated planning.

In response to a perceived need for a better planning method, SSC has implemented a newly designed method based on input from external advisory groups, budget needs surveys, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Yearly Plan, updates based on safety procedures and laws, and informed input from campus stakeholders. Additionally, the following priorities were identified by the respondents: environmental science academic program, parking, new classrooms, and daycare services. Gathered data was compiled in a report that served to inform the creation of SSC's decision filters that are used to align all goals and initiatives with the mission of the college.

Based on the evidence presented in this review, SSC understands its capacity and has a policy in place to ensure adjustments to programs and personnel when necessary. The President retains the responsibility to make fair and equitable changes to existing structures as needed. SSC anticipates changes to funding and has implemented methods to make up for shortfalls through various means including tuition increases, eliminating unfilled positions, consolidating job responsibilities, etc. These actions have minimized the need for larger increases to student costs and strengthened the

focus on priorities.

SSC's institutional planning has anticipated emerging factors such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization. Some of the goals in the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan are to execute a complete redesign of the SSC website to include new Content Management Systems, as well as an updated, attractive appearance, and easy-to-access format that is specifically mobile-friendly. The college plans to increase its online degree offerings and develop 100% online onboarding and enrollment processes. SSC provides campus-wide video conferencing options. Several other initiatives are in process for the current plan including enhancing the college's digital presence. The plan details the methods used by SSC to look to the future for changes in an evolving global economy while still maintaining quality service to the college's five-county target area.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Rating

Met

Rationale

SSC's assurance argument cites a number of sources for evidence of documenting performance in operations. Examples include the following: personnel evaluations, an annual academic plan, the college's strategic plan, degree program reviews, student evaluations of instruction, and a president's report of accomplishments. Review of this evidence suggests that SSC is making efforts to develop and document performance; however, what is less clear is how information and data from this documentation are aggregated and analyzed to provided institutional assessment. Extended conversations with various constituents during the on-site visit provided evidence of emerging practices related to documenting performance. For example, many SSC employees noted the use of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness website which publishes performance information. Additionally, certain managers cited the use of querying the enterprise software system to obtain relevant data and information. Further, human resources personnel described efforts to enhance leadership development as a result of the assessment and evaluation of performance appraisals. During the site visit, reviewers noted that assessment of student learning outcomes results are systematically aggregated, analyzed, and shared across academic divisions.

Reviewers note that processes related to this criteria are emerging at SSC; hence, the evidence is also emerging. While evidence is clear at the time of the on-site visit that the college meets expectations, it should also be noted that further improvement is warranted especially as it relates to how the college uses documentation to make improvements over time.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Rationale

The institution presents sufficient evidence that it meets Criterion 5. Reviewers encourage SSC to continue improving evidence related to how the college uses documentation of current performance to learn, make improvements, and plan for the future.

FC - Federal Compliance

INSTITUTIONS

Download the Federal Compliance Filing Form and Federal Compliance Overview at hlcommission.org/federal-compliance. After completing the form, combine it with all required appendices into a single PDF file. Bookmark the appendices in the combined PDF. Upload the PDF here by clicking the Choose File button below. The Federal Compliance Filing must be uploaded prior to locking the Assurance Argument.

PEER REVIEWERS

Download the Federal Compliance Overview and Instructions for Peer Reviewers at hlcommission.org/federal-compliance. The institution's Federal Compliance Filing and supporting documentation are provided below.

Federal Compliance reviewer: Use the template provided in the Rationale section to enter the preliminary findings for each component of Federal Compliance. The findings should include one of the following conclusions for each component as well as a rationale that fully supports the conclusion:

- The institution meets HLC's requirements.
- The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
- The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.

If the reviewer recommends monitoring for any Federal Compliance component, provide that information in the Interim Monitoring section. Describe what improvement is needed as well as how HLC would determine the institution has resolved the issue. In the Rating field, select the drop-down option that reflects the reviewer's preliminary findings.

Notify the team chair when the draft evaluation is complete, no later than one week before the team's on-site visit.

Evaluation team: While conducting the visit, the peer review team determines whether the preliminary findings made by the Federal Compliance reviewer accurately represent the institution's compliance with all applicable requirements. If necessary, adjust the rating, preliminary findings and rationale provided by the Federal Compliance reviewer. All information in the rationale should explain the findings ultimately selected. Specific instructions addressed directly to the evaluation team by the Federal Compliance Reviewer should be removed. Ensure that one of the conclusions listed above is provided for each Federal Compliance component in the Rationale section.

If the team finds that there are substantive issues related to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, address those issues within the appropriate Core Component sections of the Review tab.

Rating

Does not require monitoring

Federal Compliance Filing Form

- Seminole_State_College_Oklahoma_Federal_Compliance_Report_for_HLC_Jan_27_2020_(1)

Rationale

1. ASSIGNMENT OF CREDITS, PROGRAM LENGTH AND TUITION

Conclusion

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

SSC's catalog defines the institutional credit hour policy: For a lecture course, one credit is awarded for every fifty minutes of seat time in a class (rounded up to equal one hour). Therefore, in a 16-week semester, a three-credit class will represent 2400 minutes of seat time (3 x 50 x 16). However, the catalog does not contain any language about out-of-class expectation for additional work (a la the federal definition of a credit hour), so SSC might be advised to insert language in their catalog and other documents. Contact hours for lab, studio, and activity courses are extended beyond those for lecture and the definitions are appropriate.

A review of a random of syllabi from both standard face-to-face, 16 week semester courses, non-standard length courses, and online courses demonstrated depth and breadth to warrant the credit awarded.

2. INSTITUTIONAL RECORDS OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Conclusion

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

Both the catalog and student handbook contain the necessary language and discussion relative to student complaints, procedures, and policies. The filing noted that "Complaints are received by the individual area vice presidents. Each VP reports complaints to the institution's compliance officer who gathers appropriate statistics and monitors issues for resolution." During the on-site visit, reviewers examined documentation of complaints.

3. PUBLICATION OF TRANSFER POLICIES

Conclusion

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

SSC is an Oklahoma public institution and follows all transfer policies articulated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education for transfer from SSC to four-year institutions. The state also

provides a detailed course equivalency table to guide institutions. The SSC website has a comprehensive list of its transfer-oriented associate programs and links to two-year plans that should facilitate smooth transfer to a four-year institution within the state at other institutions. The college web site also identifies two institutions with which SSC has articulation agreements; however, information on this page ("Transfer Agreements with Four-Year Institutions") does not seem to be complete or clear in guiding students to specific programs that have such agreements. The team reviewed transfer policies during the on-site visit and concluded that appropriate policies are in place.

Seminole State College's catalog states: "Seminole State College accepts transfer students who meet the conditions set forth by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and are in good academic standing. Students with less than 2.0 GPA averages will be admitted for the first semester on academic probation." While this policy is clear regarding overall transfer admission, the catalog does not mention the conditions for acceptance in transfer of individual courses. Most institutions have a minimum grade of C and the existence of similar courses in their catalogs. During the site-vist, reviewers confirmed that SSC will accept in transfer individual courses for which the student earned the grade of D; further, the site reviewers noted that SSC's policies are typical and appropriate.

4. PRACTICES FOR VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY

Conclusion

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

New students receive their SSC IDs upon presentation of a government issued photo ID and then receive instructions to login to their SSC courses and create their own unique passwords. Identity is further verified for online courses via this individualized login, synchronous communication between students and instructors, and proctored on-campus testing, as well as off-campus identity verification via Proctor U. Beginning in Spring 2020, SSC will utilize the Respondus monitor system for identity verification of online students. There are no additional fees for identity verification of online students.

5. TITLE IV PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Conclusion

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

Seminole State College's Title IV program was recertified February 23, 2018. Its last Title IV program review was in March 2004.

The past three years' of A-133s were submitted and no material weaknesses were reported by the accounting firm for any of the three years. In August 2018, HLC referred SSC to a review panel based on a CFI of -.4. (It should be noted that their CFI in 2017 and 2015 were 2.6 and 2.9,

respectively. It was 0.0 in 2016.) In December 2018, HLC notified that SSC that their response was satisfactory and they would no longer be subjected to financial monitoring.

The College's "Consumer Information and Federal Compliance" web site contains up-to-date reports on campus crime, graduation rates for athletes, and Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act data.

The college conforms to federal regulations regarding Satisfactory Academic Progress. Policies for SAP are posted on the college's Financial Aid web page and in the catalog (p. 25).

6. PUBLICATION OF STUDENT OUTCOME DATA

Conclusion

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The college maintains a wealth of information relative to student outcomes on its "Consumer Information" web site, accessed directly from the college's home page. Information includes costs of attendance, net price calculator, graduation rates for degree-seeking students, and licensure passing rates for the Medical Laboratory Technology program and the Nursing program. The home page also has a link to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness's web page, which contains annual reports for program review and assessment reports for the range of programs.

7. STANDING WITH STATE AND OTHER ACCREDITING AGENCIES

Conclusion

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The link to the Higher Learning Commission on the "Who We Are" web page was not active; it should go directly to HLC's home page. Reviewers brought this to the attention of college officials during the site visit, and the broken link was corrected by the next business day. All other accreditation relationships are disclosed on the SSC web site and were confirmed at the respective accreditors' web sites.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

Review Dashboard

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

Review Summary

Conclusion

As a result of a thorough review of its assurance argument and a site visit on campus, the peer-review site visit team has determined that Seminole State College meets all criteria for accreditation. Further, the peer-review team recommends that no interim reports or focused visits are necessary at this time. The team recommends that Seminole State College is eligible to choose its accreditation pathway.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation
Met

Sanctions Recommendation
No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation
Eligible to choose

Federal Compliance
Does not require monitoring

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

INSTITUTION and STATE:	Seminole State College, OK
TYPE OF REVIEW:	Open Pathway Comprehensive Evaluation
DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:	Visit to include a Federal Compliance Reviewer: Dr. Neil Pagano
DATES OF REVIEW:	2/24/2020 - 2/25/2020

☐ No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements

Accreditation Status

Nature of Institution

Control: Public

Recommended Change: No change.

Degrees Awarded: Associates

Recommended Change: No change.

Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2009 - 2010

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2019 - 2020

Recommended Change: 2029-30

Accreditation Stipulations

General:
  Prior Commission approval is required for substantive change as stated in Commission policy.
Recommended Change: No change.

Additional Location:
  Prior HLC approval required.
Recommended Change: No change.

HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

Recommended Change: No change.

Accreditation Events

Accreditation Pathway   Open Pathway

Recommended Change: No change. (Eligible to Choose)

Upcoming Events

Monitoring

Upcoming Events

None

Recommended Change: No change.

Institutional Data

Educational Programs		**Recommended Change:**
Undergraduate		
Certificate	2	_____
Associate Degrees	22	_____
Baccalaureate Degrees	0	_____
Graduate		
Master's Degrees	0	_____
Specialist Degrees	0	_____
Doctoral Degrees	0	_____

Extended Operations

Branch Campuses

None

Recommended Change: No change.

Additional Locations

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Davis Correctional Center, 6888 E 133rd Road, Holdenville, OK, 74848 - Active

Gordon Cooper Technology Center, 1 John C. Bruton Dr, Shawnee, OK, 78804 - Active

Mabel Bassett Correctional, 29501 Kickapoo, McCloud, OK, 74851 - Active

Recommended Change: No change.

Correspondence Education

None

Recommended Change: No change.

Distance Delivery

11.0701 - Computer Science, Associate, AS Computer Science

13.1202 - Elementary Education and Teaching, Associate, AS Elementary Education

13.1314 - Physical Education Teaching and Coaching, Associate, AS Health, Physical Education and Recreation

14.0101 - Engineering, General, Associate, AS Pre-Engineering

19.0706 - Child Development, Associate, AA Child Development

19.0706 - Child Development, Certificate, Child Development Certificate

24.0102 - General Studies, Associate, AA General Studies

24.0103 - Humanities/Humanistic Studies, Associate, AA Language Arts and Humanities

26.9999 - Biological and Biomedical Sciences, Other, Associate, AS Health Related

26.9999 - Biological and Biomedical Sciences, Other, Associate, AS Life Sciences

27.0101 - Mathematics, General, Associate, AS Mathematics

30.9999 - Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies, Other, Associate, AA Enterprise Development - General Studies

30.9999 - Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies, Other, Associate, AS Enterprise Development - Business Administration

40.0101 - Physical Sciences, Associate, AS Physical Sciences

42.9999 - Psychology, Other, Associate, AA Behavioral Sciences

43.0103 - Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement Administration, Associate, AS Criminal Justice

45.0101 - Social Sciences, General, Associate, AA Social Sciences

50.0799 - Fine Arts and Art Studies, Other, Associate, AA Art

52.0101 - Business/Commerce, General, Associate, AS Business

52.1299 - Management Information Systems and Services, Other, Associate, AAS Business

Contractual Arrangements

01.0000 Agriculture, General - Associate - Agriculture - Mcferran Farms, Black Jack Angus Farms

51.0806 Physical Therapy Technician/Assistant - Associate - Physical Therapist Assistant AAS - Gordon Cooper Technology Center

HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

None

Recommended Change: No change.

Consortial Arrangements

13.1202 - Elementary Education and Teaching - Associate - AS Elementary Education - SSC-ECU Elementary Education

Recommended Change: No change.