CHELOGOcolorMiddle States Commission on Higher Education

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**Certification Statement:**

**Compliance with MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation**

Warren County Community College is seeking

\_\_\_ Initial Accreditation

\_X\_ Reaffirmation of Accreditation through Self Study

\_\_\_ Reaffirmation of Accreditation through Periodic Review

An institution seeking **initial accreditation** or **reaffirmation of accreditation** must affirm that it meets or continues to meet established MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation.

The undersigned hereby certify that the institution meets Requirements of Affiliation of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education as published in *Characteristics of Excellence: Requirements of Affiliation and Standards for Accreditation (13th ed., 2015).*

If it is not possible to certify compliance with all requirements specified herein, the institution must attach specific details in a separate memorandum.

\_\_\_ Exceptions are noted in the attached memorandum *(Check if applicable)*

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William J. Austin, Jr. Ed.D., President (Date)

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(Chair, Board of Trustees or Directors) (Date)

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## Introduction

Warren County Community College (“WCCC” or “the College”), a small two-year public college located in Washington NJ, serves the citizens of Warren County, New Jersey (NJ). While Warren County is less than 1½ hours from New York City, it has only peripherally been affected by the suburbanization of northern NJ. The County, with a total population of approximately 108,000, consists of a network of small towns and villages; its largest city (Phillipsburg) has a population of just under 15,000. There are few large employers within the county, so many workers commute either east or west for employment opportunities.[[1]](#footnote-1) Any significant future population growth is unlikely as most of the undeveloped/underdeveloped regions of the county are subject to stringent land use restrictions under the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (“Highlands Act”) intended to limit growth in the state’s watershed areas. The county has strong agrarian roots; its citizens have cultural ties with their Pennsylvania neighbors as well as those residing in the affluent bedroom communities to the east. Warren County is relatively racially and ethnically homogenous. Just over 90% of the county’s citizens identified themselves as white in the 2015 estimated census.

As a public community college in NJ, WCCC is guided by various NJ statutes, including those that specify the composition of the Board of Trustees (Board). The Board consists of eight members appointed by the County Freeholders (the governing board of Warren County) and two members appointed by the Governor. Members serve a four-year term. In addition, the Board consists of the County School Superintendent (an ex-officio), a non-voting “Alumni Trustee” elected by the graduating class, and the President (ex-officio non-voting member).[[2]](#footnote-2)

The College’s predecessor, the Warren County Community College Commission (“Commission”), was founded in July 1981 by the NJ State Board of Higher Education (BHE) and the Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders. In its earliest years, the Commission operated as a “College without Walls,” holding classes in local high schools and sponsoring students to matriculate at a neighboring Pennsylvania county college.

In 1987, the BHE conferred degree-granting authority upon the Commission. Classes began in a temporary educational facility leased by the Commission. Warren County Community College became licensed as the 19th and final community college in NJ by the BHE in 1991. WCCC initially was accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) in 1992. In 1996, the College moved into its permanent campus site in Washington, NJ. In July 2011, WCCC acquired a renovated facility in Phillipsburg, NJ, approximately nine miles from the main campus, and repurposed it as the Phillipsburg Education Center (PEC).

WCCC currently offers 32 degree programs (A.A., A.S. A.A.S. and A.F.A) and nine certificates in its credit division.[[3]](#footnote-3) Slightly more than half are matriculated in liberal arts programs (transfer intent); other significant programs include nurse education/nursing intent and criminal justice. The College offers a number of non-credit allied health certificate programs, including medical, dental and nursing assistant, phlebotomy, dialysis and pharmacy technician, as well as therapeutic massage. Non-credit business-related programs include computerized accounting, fiber optics and Microsoft Operating System (MOS) certification. In 2016, the College began a partnership with Sussex County Community College (“Skylands Professional Training” or SPT) to offer these and similar programs in Sussex County.

The fall 2016 to fall 2017 retention rate for all credit students was 68%, the highest level achieved to date by the College. The retention rate for full-time students was 70%. The latest three-year graduation rate is 32%, the highest ever achieved by the College.

The Continuing Education division has experienced impressive national and state certification pass rates, particularly with the full-time healthcare programs eligible for individual federal training grants. The pass rate for medical assisting and dental assisting students averaged 93% from 2013 through 2016, while the rate for certified nursing assistant students averaged 92% for this same period.

**Mission and Goals**

The College’s mission, most recently reaffirmed in December 2014, is as follows:

*Warren County Community College maintains a mission of building a community of learners through accessible and quality learning opportunities designed to meet educational goals and aspirations.*

In December 2014, the Board of Trustees formally adopted strategies in eight goal areas as part of [Strategic Plan 2020](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Introduction%20Links\WCCC-Strategic-Plan.pdf),the latest strategic plan covering the period 2015-2019:[[4]](#footnote-4) The plan covers eight goal areas as follows:

* Outcomes Assessment and Program Review
* Developmental Education Assessment
* Enrollment and Retention
* Distance Education
* Workforce and Economic Development
* Human Resources Planning
* Facilities Planning
* Enterprise Resource Planning System Implementation

Since the Periodic Review in 2013, WCCC has focused on realigning its activities to the new realities of enrollment and resource limitations. The College has focused on selected investments to enhance student success.

One of WCCC’s most significant priorities has been the improvement of retention and graduation rates. An issue that has been identified statewide has been “credit creep” as programs have increased the number of credits for graduation. Legislation has been proposed in NJ to mandate a 60 credit associate degree as part of overall higher education reform. To ensure that WCCC is able to comply with any new requirements and after a College in-service and Board Retreat that focused on the work of Complete College America, the Board of Trustees adopted a new standard for associate degrees during 2015-16, calling for degree programs to be at 60 credits (unless otherwise prescribed by program credentialing agencies). As part of this effort, the College has reexamined associate degree programs for consistency with general education goals and compliance with the Board’s new 60-credit policy. Where appropriate, these realignments were conducted in consultation with external program advisory boards.

**Finance and Enrollment**

WCCC’s revised FY18 unrestricted operating budget is just under $9.2 million. The College’s full-time staffing has remained relatively constant over the past fifteen years at 60-65 employees; however, the composition of the staff has changed significantly. Full-time faculty have increased from 16 members in FY04 to 26 teaching professionals (20 faculty, 5 teaching administrators and a Nursing Executive Director). The College’s total assets as of June 30, 2017 were $15.6 million.[[5]](#footnote-5) The assets of the WCCC Foundation as of the end of FY17 were $1.1 million.

Similar to most community colleges in the Middle States region, WCCC experienced a dramatic enrollment growth from FY09 through FY11 due to the economic recession. Since that time, on-campus enrollments have returned to the pre-recessionary level. During the 2016-17 academic year, 1,810 students attended WCCC on a full or part-time basis. While on-campus enrollment has declined, the number of dual enrollment (high school) students last year rose to 1,750 students, more than triple the level of enrollment three years earlier. This is attributed to the additional evaluation and credentialing of high school electives. WCCC does not charge dual enrollment students tuition (costs are covered through a special county appropriation), which helps to explain the high student enrollment in this program.

Despite enrollment changes, the College has been able to make selective infrastructure enhancements. With a state grant and College matching funds, WCCC was able to invest $1.3 million in a technology upgrade program. Approximately half of these funds were used to implement a new Enterprise Research Planning (ERP) system (Jenzabar EX), which is one of the seven priorities of Strategic Plan 2020. The balance has been used to convert two classrooms to computer labs, update all servers and related networking equipment, and refresh all computers. The College adopted a new technology plan in 2017 and set aside funds to implement projects for first three years of the plan.

WCCC has the smallest physical plant of any public college in NJ, with two facilities (in Washington and Phillipsburg) totaling just under 132,000 sq. ft. In June 2016, WCCC received a $2 million grant from the State of NJ for a Learning Annex. This $3.2 million project will provide facilities not available in the main building, including a large lecture hall, a learning lab and ADA/unisex restroom facilities. This facility is scheduled to be completed in fall 2018.

Because of limited space, the College has focused on supporting student academic needs rather than expanding ancillary and auxiliary activities. The College has maintained its current facilities, has virtually no deferred maintenance backlog and has set aside funds to handle future renewal and replacement needs. However, the Board of Trustees has set aside funds for future capital needs, including roof and boiler replacement as well as technology equipment upgrades.

## The Self-Study Process

Once the draft *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation* were published, the College began planning for the Self-Study process. In the 2014-15 academic year, the College convened an ad hoc Middle States Committee to review each of the new standards.

After the Self-Study Institute in fall 2015, the College determined that it would assemble a Self-Study Committee and use seven working groups to develop the Self-Study. The Steering Committee, consisting of the Self-Study co-chairs, the chairs/co-chairs of the seven working groups plus two Data Facilitators/Editors, a Researcher and a Logistics Coordinator, first convened in January 2016. The Steering Committee helped assemble the Self-Study design and the documentation roadmap, which was approved by MSCHE in July 2016.

During 2016-17, seven working groups consisting of volunteer faculty and staff assembled to review each standard. The Steering Committee also convened periodically during this time to ensure that the working groups were on track with the process. In fall 2016, the working groups focused on answering the critical questions developed in the Design Document. In spring 2017, the working groups helped develop and edit the first full draft of the Self-Study report.

The Compliance document was assembled by the Co-Chairs, the Data Facilitators/Editors and the Logistics Coordinator. The documents included the Documentation Roadmap were assembled by the Co-Chairs, facilitator and researcher as well as staff in various offices.

Materials for the Self-Study were made available to the working groups and then the entire campus through a Group in My Warren (College portal). Employees also have also been provided with updates on the Self-Study process during each In-Service session over the past three years.

The Board of Trustee’s Policy Committee serves as the Board liaison committee throughout the process. This Committee focuses on policy, academic and licensure matters for the Board of Trustees. Students participated through two focus groups held during the in spring 2017.

The Draft report was released to the full campus community in early October 2017 and discussed in the October 2017 In-Service session. The final report reflects suggestions made by the Visiting Team Chair (Dr. Thomas Isekenegbe) who visited the campus on November 6, 2017.

## Requirements of Affiliation

The fifteen Requirements of Affiliation are included in the submission as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Requirements of Affiliation Crosswalk** | | | |
|  | Requirement | | Location |
| 1 | | Institution is licensed through NJ | Compliance Document |
| 2 | | Institution is operational | Compliance Document |
| 3 | | Institution meets new candidacy requirements | N/A to WCCC |
| 4 | | Institution communicates to MSCHE in English | Compliance Document |
| 5 | | Institution complies with Federal and State Requirements | Compliance Document |
| 6 | | Institution complies with Interregional and Inter-institutional policies | N/A to WCCC |
| 7 | | Institution has as approved mission and goals | Standard I |
| 8 | | Institution systemically evaluates educational programs and services | Standard III, IV, V, VI |
| 9 | | Institutions academic programs are of sufficient rigor and scope | Standards III, V |
| 10 | | Institutional planning integrates goals and assessment | Standard I, III, IV, V, VI |
| 11 | | Institution has appropriate resources and financial processes in place | Standard VI |
| 12 | | Institution has appropriate governance in place | Standard VII |
| 13 | | Governing body is free from conflicts of interest | Standard VII |
| 14 | | Governing Board attests to accuracy of information provided to MSCHE | Certification Statement |
| 15 | | Institution has appropriately credentialed and trained teaching staff | Standard III |

The Compliance Report was uploaded to Middle States in Early December, 2017. A copy of this report also will be included on the 2018 Middle States Group on of the WCCC web portal.

## Warren County Community College Terminology and Abbreviations

ACCT Association of Community College Trustees

ACE Accelerated College Education

ACEN Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc.

ADA Americans with Disabilities Act

AOA NJ Academic Officers Association

BHE NJ Board of Higher Education

BOSE Board of School Estimate

C4 Community College Completion Corps

CAAHEP Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs

C & I Curriculum and Instruction Committee

CCSSE Community College Survey of Student Engagement

CEPA Conscientious Employee Protection Action

Chapter 12 Chapter 12, 1971, a State/County bond program

CMDS Configuration Management Data System

EAGLE Easy Access to Grant and Loan Entry (NetPartner)

ELF Equipment Leasing Fund

ELT Enterprise Leadership Team

EOF Educational Opportunity Fund

ERGOS ERGOS Technology, the College’s IT provider

ERP Enterprise Resource Planning System

ESIP Energy Saving Improvement Program

FAFSA Free Application for Federal Student Aid

FERPA Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act

FTE Full-time Equivalent

FTFTF First-time Full-time Freshman

FYE First Year Experience

HESAA NJ Higher Education Student Assistance Authority

HETI Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Fund or Program

HMC Hackettstown Medical Center

HPOG Health Professions Opportunity Grant

HR Human Resources

IPEDS Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

IPS Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey

IR Institutional Research

ISC Instructional Support Center

IT Information Technology

Jenzabar Shorthand for Jenzabar EX system, the College’s ERP System

JOP Junior Option Program

LMS Learning Management System

MSCHE Middle States Commission on Higher Education

NACEP National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships

NJCCC NJ Council of County Colleges

NJ STARS NJ Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship

NJEA NJ Education Association (Faculty Union Association)

OA Outcomes Assessment

NSO New Student Orientation

OA/PR Outcomes Assessment/Program Review

OSHE Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

PARCC Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College & Careers

PEC Phillipsburg Education Center

PERC NJ Public Employment Relations Commission

PR Program Review

PRR Periodic Review Report

PTK Phi Theta Kappa

RIF Reduction in force

SAP Satisfactory Academic Progress

SBGC Small Business Growth Center

SCCC Sussex County Community College

SEOG Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant

SGA Student Government Association

SNO Student Nurse Organization

SOP Senior Option Program

SPT Skylands Professional Training Center (Partnership with SCCC)

SSI Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory

STEM Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

TAG Tuition Aid Grant program. Largest financial aid program in NJ

TE Teams Elite system

TLTR Teaching, Learning, Technology Roundtable

TOEFL Test of English as a Foreign Language

VALE NJ Virtual Academic Library Environment

VAWA Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013

VFA Voluntary Framework of Accountability

VOIP Voice over Internet Protocol

VIPER Veterans In Pursuit of Educational Readiness

WCCC Warren County Community College

WCTS Warren County Technical School

WDB Workforce Development Board

WIOA Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

# Standard I- Mission and Goals

*The institution’s mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.*

## Requirements of Affiliation

This chapter addresses the following Requirements of Affiliation:

#7) The institution has a statement of mission and goals, approved by its governing body that defines its purpose within the context of higher education.

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

## Overview

WCCC’s mission, vision, goals and motto reflect the College’s emphasis on serving its local community through affordable, high quality programs. The strategic goals for the period 2015-19 emphasize the restructuring of developmental education, the use of assessment to enhance educational programs, including developmental education and a focus on enhanced student services. Critical to this success is the proper staffing, facility and computing resources to support these endeavors. The College also recognizes its role in serving the Warren County region and supporting economic development in Northwestern NJ. Providing educational services that are confluent with the needs of the local community is critical to the College’s success in the region.

## Discussion and Analysis

### WCCC Mission, Vision and Motto

The College’s mission statement is as follows:

*Warren County Community College maintains a mission of building a community of learners through accessible and quality learning opportunities designed to meet educational goals and aspirations.*

This statement was last revised in 2009 by a Strategic Planning working group consisting of faculty, staff, Board of Trustee, and community members. This group, met, analyzed and revised the mission statement in preparation for the 2009 Strategic Plan. The Board approved this mission in the 2009 Strategic Plan and reaffirmed it in December 2014 as part of the [Strategic Plan 2020](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Introduction%20Links\WCCC-Strategic-Plan.pdf) (the current college strategic plan).

As part of the Strategic Plan 2020, the Board approved the following Vision Statement:

*Provide lifelong learning opportunities that will enhance individuals’ success, strengthen commitment to the community, and reflect innovation and change.*

Finally, the Strategic Plan also includes the following motto:

*From Education to Work: For Warren County and Society*

The Mission, Vision and Motto reflect the College’s role as an open access institution serving the Warren County, NJ community. The Mission Statement reflects the overarching goals of quality and accessibility. The Vision Statement introduces two major themes—innovation and change—that are highlighted in the Strategic Planning goals. These themes address national higher education challenges and local issues, such as demographics, which are unique to WCCC. The motto makes it clear that the College’s goal is to help support the Warren County region, both by serving students from the region[[6]](#footnote-6) and promoting economic growth.

Warren County Community College is a unique NJ institution. Initially founded as a “College without Walls,” it was the last public college to develop a permanent campus. Its initial campus building was built in 1995. Its county governance board, the Board of Chosen Freeholders, has been supportive of construction to support educational facilities, but has not supported ancillary facilities. As a result, the College has the smallest footprint of any community college in NJ, but one of the highest graduation rates in the state.

Warren County NJ is located in the Highlands region of NJ. This region was made subject to substantial regional development restrictions in 2004 to preserve the state’s water infrastructure. This, in turn has led to major restrictions on regional economic growth and stringent controls on any new construction. Therefore, the County’s population is projected to grow very slowly, if at all in the next decade (see *Strategic Plan 2020* pages 24-25).

### Previous Strategic Planning Processes

The College has enacted three Strategic Plans since 2004. The first plan was developed and covered the period of 2005-2008. The second plan focused on 2009-2014 timeframe.

Planning for Strategic Plan 2020 began in June 2013, after the re-accreditation WCCC. As noted in the PRR, the College had completed or made significant progress in nearly all of the priorities identified in the [2009 Strategic Planning Goals](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\2009%20Strategic%20Plan.doc). As part of the implementation of that plan, the College developed an annual [Departmental Planning template](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Department%20Plan%20Template.docx), which cross-lists each departmental goals against the achievement of one or more strategies in the Strategic Plan. These are combined into a strategic planning matrix (See the [2016-2017 Departmental Plan Report](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Departmental%20Plan%20Results%20%202016-17.pdf)) to demonstrate how the activities in each departmental area support the fulfillment of objectives under various goals.

### Strategic Plan 2020 Development

Strategic Plan 2020 focuses on the period 2015 through 2019. It was developed during 2014 and was the culmination of a number of different planning activities as follows:

1. Two visioning sessions were conducted in the spring of 2014, one with the College’s Board in March and one in April at an In-Service for faculty and staff. The results of these sessions were put in pictorial form on pages 5 and 6 of the Strategic Plan.
2. During spring-summer 2014, the President and several Trustees visited each municipal governing board in Warren County to discuss strategic priorities and to elicit community input on the development of the Strategic Plan.
3. During summer 2014, the Board of Trustees examined various [Presidential Priorities](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Presidential%20Priorities%20%20(2014-2017).pptx) and ranked the importance. This list helped to develop the new strategic goals. This initial plan was developed with the assistance of a Rowan University graduate cohort in Higher Education Leadership, which helped to frame out what became the final Strategic Plan 2020 document.
4. From the Board’s list of priorities, eight goal areas were developed as follows:
   1. Outcomes Assessment and Program Review
   2. Developmental Education Assessment
   3. Enrollment and Retention
   4. Distance Education
   5. Workforce and Economic Development
   6. Human Resources Planning
   7. Facilities Planning
   8. Enterprise Resource Planning System Implementation
5. Eight working groups (each assigned to a specific goal area) were formed in fall 2014 comprising Board members, administrators, faculty and staff. The working groups, after a semester of deliberation, developed the strategies for each goal area. Three to eight strategies were formulated within each goal, which are described on pages 27-35 of Strategic Plan 2020.

Strategic Plan 2020 was approved in concept by the Board of Trustees in December 2014. It was introduced to the Warren County Community as part of the [State of the College](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\2015%20State%20of%20the%20College.pdf) session in December 2015, which included county political and educational leaders. This presentation was provided to the campus community at the spring 2015 In-Service session.[[7]](#footnote-7) Updates to the plan have been provided at subsequent In-Service presentations.

### WCCC Strategic Goals

The goals in the Strategic Plan are congruent with the College’s mission by focusing on accessible, affordable and quality programs for Warren County with a focus on an expansion of community service opportunities, particularly in the Continuing Education division. The goals reflect key priorities as follows:

1. Outcomes Assessment and Program Review—the goals in this area are consistent with a 2015 [Consultant’s Report on Assessment](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Consultant's%20Report%20on%20Assessment.docx) commissioned by WCCC to make the outcomes assessment process more meaningful and impactful to the campus programs and services. Achievements in this area have included the implementation of a new Assessment Committee and the redesign of the program review and outcomes assessment processes.
2. Developmental Education Assessment—the goals and the outcomes in this area also grew out of a [2013 Consultant’s Report on Developmental Education](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\External%20Review%20of%20Developmental%20Education.docx), which identified restructuring the current developmental education offerings and offering new pathways to students as key priorities. WCCC has redesigned its developmental education sequence in mathematics and fast-tracked more students into college-level English. This led to the [Pathways Initiative.](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Pathways%20Initiatives%20for%20Middle%20States.docx)
3. Enrollment and Retention—enrollment and retention initiatives continue to be high priorities for the College. WCCC continues to face enrollment constraints due to both demographic and regional growth limitations in Warren County. A focus on enhanced retention efforts also mirror the state and federal priorities of student success and college completion. WCCC has expanded online retention initiatives with students and has significantly expanded outreach to high school students. Preliminary results show an increase in both retention and graduation rates.
4. Distance Education—ensuring the quality, consistency and student-ease of distance education was a key priority, especially as the College was examining new LMS and ERP systems. The goals in this area focus on best practices in addition to technology enhancements. A new LMS system was implemented in fall 2015 and online instruction has been enhanced with additional faculty training, tutorials and use of a standardized online template.
5. Workforce and Economic Development—goals in this area grew out of the College’s increased role in supporting economic growth through career and customized training for area businesses. A focus in this area also resulted in a partnership with Sussex County Community College on continuing education initiatives (Skylands Professional Training or SPT).
6. Human Resources Planning—goals in this area ensure that WCCC programs and services are provided by appropriately trained and credentialed employees. The College continues to support additional doctoral studies by faculty and staff and all instructors are master’s prepared.
7. Facilities Planning—WCCC’s Facilities Master Plan calls for limited development on the Washington campus and the possible expansion in other municipalities. Goals in this area reflect the Master Plan and the need to renew current facilities. The most significant accomplishment in this area has been the commencement of the Building Annex project, expected to be completed in 2018.
8. Enterprise Resource Planning System Implementation—Replacement of the 1995 ERP system became a high priority for the College three years ago. The effective implementation of the Jenzabar EX system was identified as critical to expand online services, enhance data collection and reporting and streamline administrative operations. The system is now operational.

Within each goal area, there are three to eight strategies (see [Strategic Plan 2020 Goals](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\STRATEGIC%20PLAN%202020%20Goals.docx)). With the exception of the developing a new facility in Hackettstown (which is dependent on both state bond funds and a partnership with Hackettstown Medical Center) all goals and strategies were developed assuming current staffing and budgetary levels.

A more complete discussion of the implementation of the Strategic Plan is found under Standard VI.

### Assessment of Strategic Goals

Because the strategic goals are fundamentally tied to the Strategic Plan, the annual assessment is discussed more fully under Standard 6. The President provides an annual update to the Board of Trustees on the strategic goals (See the [November 2016 presentation](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Strategic%20Planning%20Goal%20Progress%20Nov%202016.pdf) and [November 2017 presentation](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Strategic%20Planning%20Update%20Nov%202017.pdf)). Key employees are assigned the responsibility for implementing one or more of the Strategic Goals or Individual Strategies and reporting progress in meeting these goals/strategies in their [Annual Performance Evaluation](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Employee%20Performance%20Appraisal.docx). All staff also meet with the President to review not only their Annual Performance Evaluation, but also their [Personal Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Personal%20Planning%20Template.docx), which focuses prospectively on employee activities for the coming year. Each department also produces a Departmental Plan using the [Departmental Plan template](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Department%20Plan%20Template.docx) that highlights not only the strategic initiatives, but also the annual priorities within each office area.

As has occurred in prior plans, assessment of the current plan will lead to identifying new priorities for the next strategic plan. Development of the next plan is scheduled to begin during the 2018-19 academic year. The overall WCCC assessment process is described in more detail in the [Institutional Effectiveness Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Institutional%20Effectiveness%20Plan.docx).

## Summary

WCCC’s mission focuses on serving the Warren County community, with College activities focused on meeting the regional needs. WCCC’s mission, goals and strategies are incorporated within the Strategic Plan 2020. The College formally and systemically reviews its progress on the eight goal areas on an annual basis and reports thee to the Board of Trustees. Employees are evaluated based on progress toward meeting strategies within their program or service area. The Board of Trustees is involved in the development and evaluation of College goals and annually reviews the progress toward meeting these goals.

## Institutional Opportunity

* As the College develops its next Strategic Plan, it should renew its Mission Statement to ensure that it is congruent with any emerging community and higher education needs.

# Standard II-Ethics and Integrity

*Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of eﬀective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.*

## Overview

WCCC has a comprehensive series of policies and procedures to ensure that the College creates a culture that focuses on ethics and integrity. The policies in the College Policy Manual protect the rights of students, faculty and employees of WCCC. The College uses its website to publish its catalog, student handbook, various student policies and the College’s policy manual. Paper copies of these documents also are available. The policy manual is updated after each board meeting and is a “living document.”

## Discussion and Analysis

### Academic Freedom and Intellectual Property Rights

A statement on academic freedom is a requirement for NJ licensure. A clause about academic freedom was included in original 2012-15 Warren County College Faculty Association Contract but was eliminated as part of the NJ Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) Scope Decision in 2016. WCCC, similar to a number of other community colleges, submitted its Faculty Contract to PERC in 2015 to determine if various provisions were subject to collective bargaining.

The Scope Decision deleted items that were deemed not negotiable, including the Academic Freedom section (see [2012-15 contract with PERC scope deletions](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\Faculty%20Contract%20Reflecting%20Scope%20Deletions.doc)). For this reason, the Board of Trustees adopted [Policy 201.2.3](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\201.2.3.docx) as the College’s commitment to academic freedom.

Specific language related to intellectual property also is no longer included in the Faculty Contract (this was negotiated out in the 2012-15 contract). However, the Board of Trustees has adopted [Policy 201.2.4](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\201.2.4.docx) to cover intellectual property issues in compliance with recognized standards of “work product.” Article VI (I) of the Faculty Contract calls for additional compensation for the development of new courses or programs.

### Campus Climate and Diversity

WCCC commitment to equality and a barrier-free campus is articulated through various Board of Trustees policies, including:

* [Policy 201.1](E:\\Final Report\\Standard 2 Links\\201.1.docx)-Affirmative Action (affirms the Board’s commitment to non-discrimination)
* [Policy 201.2](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\201.2.docx)-Anti-Harassment (affirms the Board’s commitment to creating an environment free of harassment)
* [Policy 201.2.2](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\201.2.2.docx)-NJ Conscientious Employee Protection Action (CEPA) Employer Policy (provides “whistleblower” protections to employees)
* [Policy 304.1](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\304.1.docx)- WCCC Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (creates atmosphere of civility for rights and opinions of others and creates conditions conducive to the freedom to learn)
* [Policy 304.2-](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\304.2.docx) WCCC Standards of Academic Conduct (lists academic expectations and obligations of students)
* [Policy 304.3](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\304.3.docx)-Standards and regulations to related to community conduct
* [Policy 304.7](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\304.7.docx)-NJ policy against intimidation and bullying
* [Policy 308](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\308.docx)-Services to students with disabilities, with appeal rights for students who believe they are not receiving appropriate educational accommodations.

All policies are shown on the website under [College Policies](http://www.warren.edu/college-policies/). This page is linked in My Warren and key student policies are available in the [Student Handbook](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\WCCC-Handbook-2017-18.pdf) and the [College Catalog](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\2017-18%20College%20Catalog.pdf).

Over the past five years, there have been no significant student or employee issues raised under any of these policies. Any student issues have been resolved informally by College officials. Any employee issues have been considered through employee grievance policies as discussed below.

### Student Grievance Policies/Appeals

The [Student Grievance Policies](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\Student%20Grievance%20Procedures.docx) (containing procedures for both academic and non-academic grievance and disciplinary procedures) along with [Policy 305](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\305.docx) (Student Complaint Procedure) provide students with the ability to appeal or grieve College decisions for both academic and non-academic decisions. Most student complaints and grievances are settled at an informal level.

There are several basic forms of complaints/appeals with different processes:

1. Grade Appeals—these are handled through the Office of Academic Affairs. These are often settled at an informal level. Any records of grade changes are recorded on a [Change of Grade form.](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\Change%20of%20Grade%20Form.docx)
2. Financial Appeals/Requests for a Refund, Late Drop or Late Withdrawal—these appeals are handled through the [Special Considerations](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\Special-Consideration-Request.pdf) process. Students submit a written appeal, which is reviewed by a committee of staff from Student Services, Academic Affairs, Financial Aid and the Business Office. Documentation is maintained in the Office of Student Services, which coordinates the process.
3. Financial Aid Appeals—these primarily are written appeals through the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) process in accordance with federal requirements and [Policy 403.7](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\403.7.docx). The Financial Aid office reviews these appeals.
4. Disability Services Appeals—these appeals are considered by the Disabilities Services coordinator. Almost all of these are resolved informally by the Coordinator.
5. Title IX/Harassment Complaints--these issues are handled informally and formally through the Human Resources Office. That office keeps a record of all issues.
6. Miscellaneous Complaints—these are complaints that do not fall into any of the categories above using the [Student Complaint Form](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\WCCC-Student-Complaint-Form.pdf). Only one complaint has been was instituted in 2015 and was resolved by the Human Resources Office.

For purposes of complying with the Middle States process on student complaints, the College considers written complaints that fall into categories #5 and #6 as recordable student complaints. Over the past five years, the College received 21 written student complaints as shown in Chart II-1.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart II-1: Student Complaints** | | | | | |
| Type | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| Student against Student | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Student against Instructor | 4 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 2 |
| Student against Employee | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 4 |

Most issues were resolved informally by the Human Resources Director through a discussion of one or more parties. Four cases were forwarded to legal staff for advice or follow-up communications to one or more parities. All complaints have been resolved. Documentation for these complaints will be available in the Office of Human Resources during the team visit.

Complaints assist the College in determining where additional professional development and training may be warranted. These, along with changing federal and state requirements have led to In-Service sessions hosted by outside professionals focusing on student and campus climate issues focusing on Title IX training, harassment, discrimination, student academic accommodations, and the handling of socio-economic and generational differences in the classroom.

### Employee Grievance Policies

Employee grievances are covered by the Faculty Contract and Board policies. [Article V](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\Article%20V%20Faculty%20Contract.docx) of the Faculty Contract calls for a process for a faculty grievance process. All other employees are covered by [Policy 201.4](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\201.4.docx), Employee Grievance Process. Over the past five years, there have been several faculty grievances filed which have been settled at the College level. Under the State of NJ Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC) rules, an individual or a union can file an unfair labor practice (ULP). As of the writing of this report, there is a ULP filed by the WCC Faculty Association related to the faculty status of the Teaching Administrators. This ULP has been put on hold pending a PERC decision on the “College Lecturer” position at other NJ institutions. A second ULP relating to the promotional process has primarily been dismissed, but a section under impact negotiations remains under PERC review at this time.

### Ethics and Integrity

All employees are subject to the Code of Ethics for College Employees ([Policy 201.11](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\201.11.docx)). The policy is aligned with NJ Executive Orders and policies associated with appropriate ethical standards of public employees. Employees also are required to disclose outside employment ([Policy 201.11.1](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\201.11.1.docx)) to the College must comply with the Title IV Code of Conduct Requirements ([Policy 201.11.2](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\201.11.2.docx)). A Code of Ethics Policy also exists for College Trustees ([Policy 102.4](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\102.4.docx)). There have been no ethical complaints made either from internal or external constituents relative to these policies.

### Personnel Policies and Procedures

Chapter II of the Board policy manual covers the College’s personnel policies. The Policy Manual is updated between Board of Trustees meetings ([College Policies](http://www.warren.edu/college-policies/)) and linked into My Warren. Employees annually receive a hard copy of [Chapter II of Policy Manual](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\CHAPTER%20II.docx) and must acknowledge receipt of the document. Chapter II covers not only employee rights, but also procedures to access various employee benefits.

In the case of the College’s anti-harassment and Title IX policies, employees must take an online survey to show that they have read and understood the materials. Key. Several college leaders also have taken safety and security assessments through the Office of Homeland Security.

### Disclosure of Information to Students and the Public

Student disclosure information required by the federal government is displayed on the College’s website under [Student Right to Know Info](http://www.warren.edu/student-disclosure-information/). Given the importance of student information policies, the link to this information is included on the College’s home page. Disclosure information not only includes all federal Title IV disclosure requirements, but also State of NJ information and general college information to assist students.

Data on this site are updated as necessary. Whenever policy changes are made, the College updates the online policy manual. Each semester, the College sends out the 10th day letter, which reminds students to consult the Student Disclosure information on the website. Information on the policies are also included in the Student Handbook, which is distributed to all new students at the time of registration. Handbooks are made available to all students at the start of each semester. In addition, College policies (including VAWA policies) are reviewed during the mandatory Orientation Sessions at the beginning of each semester.

With the increased use of online resources, the clarity and organization of online information is very important. Students in general tend to bypass the College’s website and go directly into My Warren, as this is where course, schedule, payment and grade information is. The College has used links to the disclosure information, the Student Handbook and the Policy manual on My Warren. However, the overall structure of the College’s website ([www.warren.edu](http://www.warren.edu)) has not been updated in approximately five years. One priority of the College is to design a new website that is more contemporary. As part of any website redesign, the College will examine both the functionality and accessibility for internal and external users.

**Student Affordability Information**

As discussed in more detail in Standard IV, the College endeavors to provide students with timely and accurate financial assistance information. Under both the [Right to Know information](http://www.warren.edu/student-disclosure-information/) and the [Financial Aid webpage](http://www.warren.edu/financial-aid/), WCCC provides [General Information](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\Financial%20Aid-General%20Information.pdf) about financial aid available to students. The Financial aid portion of the website provides additional information on the application process, eligibility information, cost of attendance, verification and links and resources. A separate page also is devoted to information on [Veteran’s Benefits](http://www.warren.edu/veterans-benefits/).

### Review and Assessment of College Policies and Procedures

College policies are reviewed, re-affirmed, updated, created and eliminated (as deemed necessary) on a continual basis. Every other year, the President’s Cabinet reviews the Policy Manual and sets up a schedule for upcoming policy review. This schedule is shared with the Board of Trustees (see [Policy Review Schedule](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\Policy%20Review%20Schedule.docx) for the 2017 scheduled policy updates). The entire Policy Manual has been reviewed twice in the past three years to ensure that the College’s policies remain in accordance with any state and federal requirements.

## Summary

The College has extensive policies and procedures in place to maintain ethical standards and to address any potential violations of these policies. There are appeal and grievance processes in place for students and employees. Wherever possible, the College uses electronic means (website and My Warren) to communicate information to the community. When new requirements arise at the state or federal level, the College revises or adopts policies to reflect any changes.

## Institutional Opportunity

* As part of its implementation of the next Technology Master Plan, the College should redesign its website with a focus on accessibility, increased standardization of content material and improved transparency.

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

*An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.*

## Requirements of Affiliation

This chapter addresses the following Requirement of Affiliation:

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

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

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

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

## Overview

WCCC currently offers 32 degree programs (A.A., A.S. A.A.S. and A.F.A) and nine certificate programs in its credit division.[[8]](#footnote-8) The A.A., A.S. and A.F.A. offerings prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions. The A.A.S. and certificate programs prepare students for immediate employment within the various business and industry sectors in Warren County and surrounding communities.

The Nurse Education Program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc. (ACEN), as well as the NJ Board of Nursing. The Medical Assisting credit and non-credit programs are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). The Automotive Technology Program is ACE/NACEP certified.

Nearly all WCCC credit programs are offered at the Washington Campus. The College collaborates with the Warren County Technical High School (WCTS) to offer A.A.S. programs in Automotive Technology and Food and Beverage Management and uses the WCTS labs to offer the hands-on courses for these programs.

WCCC courses are taught by a fully credentialed professional staff. All credit instructors must at least be master’s prepared and undergo a criminal background check. The College offers a robust dual enrollment program free of charge to all Warren County school districts. Teachers in this program must meet similar education credentials as well as NJ Licensure requirements.

In addition to direct instructional services, the College supports student learning through Library and Instructional Resource Center (testing and tutoring) services. The College measures the effectiveness of these services and actively endeavors to improve both curricular offerings and ancillary educational services.

WCCC offers a substantial number of short-term, workforce development programs along with customized training courses through its Continuing Education division. These target the immediate needs of the local economy, with an emphasis on the occupational demands in the business and healthcare industries.

## Discussion and Analysis

### Degree Requirements

Degree requirements for WCCC are established in accordance with [Policy 402.1](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\402.1.docx). That policy calls for credit programs to be approximately 60 credits,[[9]](#footnote-9) unless accreditation or licensure requirements call for higher credit limits. The Board made this change in 2015 under the guidance of Complete College America to make a degree more affordable and more accessible. NJ has been debating the requirement of a 60-credit Associates level degree since 2015. The 60-credit requirement called for a redesign of most credit programs, which occurred during the 2015-16-and 2016-17 academic years. The Curriculum and Instruction Committee (C & I Committee) reviewed these changes and then recommended the curriculum changes to the President. Because the program changes were less than 15% of the total credits in a program, no NJ approval was required. A more comprehensive discussion of program changes and the rationale for program changes is discussed under Standard V.

### Program/Course Approval Process

The C & I Committee, with representatives from both faculty and staff, is the committee that reviews programs and courses and makes recommendations for curricular changes. The following approvals are required for programs and courses:

* New programs or significant program changes must be approved by the President, the Board of Trustees and the NJ President’s Council.[[10]](#footnote-10) (See the [NJ Higher Education Program Approval Process](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\2017-18%20Higher%20Education%20Program%20Approval%20Process.pdf), which is the guide for C & I and statewide program approval.)
* New courses must be approved by the President and the NJ Council of County College Course Review Committee. New general education courses must also be approved by the Council of County College’s General Education Committee.

The C & I Committee meets monthly during the academic year. The [C & I By-Laws](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\C%20&%20I%20By-Laws.doc) identify the following charge for the Committee:

1. Review new courses, certificates, and program proposals.
2. Review revisions to existing course and program proposals.
3. Make recommendations to the President on academic issues or concerns regarding academic and educational policy.
4. Provide a forum to review general academic issues and concerns.

The C & I Committee maintains its own C & I Group Page on My Warren where by-laws, agendas, agenda materials, and minutes are posted. Agenda materials back to 2015 are available online. Minutes since 2013 also are available online.

### Program Review

The College’s academic assessment processes, including program review, were evaluated by a consultant in 2015 (See the 2015 [Consultant’s Report on Assessment](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Consultant's%20Report%20on%20Assessment.docx)). Based on this report, WCCC made a number of changes in its assessment processes. These changes included the establishment of a new Assessment Committee (to provide continual review of assessment activities) and the revision of the program review (PR) process, which had been in place for over a decade. The Assessment Committee was to be in addition to the OA/PR Committee, which guides faculty in various departments through the OA/PR process.

The current PR process calls for a three-year cycle of program review (a change from the prior five-year cycle). In addition, the review process was streamlined from a two-year, two-step process (first reviewing courses, then programs) to a one-year process using a simplified [Program Review template](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Revised%20Program%20Review%20Report.docx). Course assessment is now incorporated in the annual [Instructor Outcomes Assessment template](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Instructor%20Outcomes%20Assessment%20Form.docx). These assessment initiatives are discussed in detail under Standard V.

### Curricular Changes

WCCC has focused intensely on program and curricular changes, consistent with the priorities of the Board of Trustees, Strategic Plan 2020 and prospective state requirements. In particular, the Strategic Plan focuses on the redesign of remedial education. The College, with the C & I Committee taking the lead in reviewing curricular changes, has focused on the following:

1. Reducing credit programs to 60 credits (unless higher credit limits are required for licensure or credentialing). See the [Credit Reductions-Revised Program Requirements](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Credit%20Reductions-Realignments%20by%20Program.pdf).
2. Standardizing general education requirements, particularly for STEM and non-STEM programs; and
3. Revamping the remedial education curriculum to create a STEM track and a non-STEM track.

Over the past two years, the C & I Committee reviewed 19 programs for reduced/amended content.

In addition, C & I is responsible for evaluating new programs. Since the last PRR, WCCC has not added new programs. In June 2017, C & I and the Board of Trustees approved a proposal for a new Baccalaureate Degree in Applied Science in Degree Technical Studies (BASDTS). This program would be a companion to the Associate in Applied Sciences for Technical Studies and would serve military veterans who come to the College with accumulated ACE credits for service training. Currently, the only institution that offers such as program is Thomas Edison University, which only offers online education in this area.

The program will require approval from the NJ President’s Council, the Secretary of Higher Education (for a program exceeding mission) and MSCHE (substantive change committee). At this point, the NJ’s President’s Council has not endorsed any baccalaureate programs at community colleges in NJ (turning down several Bachelor of Nursing Programs, despite a high demand for these programs). Therefore, there is a significant hurdle to overcome to offer this initiative. However, the program is strongly endorsed by the Warren County community as a way of serving northern NJ veterans who want to complete a campus-based bachelor’s program. The College began the submittal process at the state level for this program in spring 2018. It is anticipated that approval for such a program could take years in NJ.

Another avenue for new programs in through the Division of Corporate and Continuing Education. The Medical Assisting Degree, authorized in 2011, began as a non-credit program and currently offers both credit and non-credit tracks. At this time, the Continuing Education division is examining several new options, including initiatives with drone technology. In June 2017, the Board of Trustees designated up to $75,000 to support a drone lab in cooperation with the NJ Institute of Technology (NJIT). Should this initiative be successful, the College may consider options for A.A.S. ` degree(s) related to drone repair or drone applications.

On the credit side, faculty currently are examining the viability of developing an A.S. in Addiction Counseling. This program would build off some of the special topic offerings in the A.A. in General Education. In spring 2017, the College is piloting an Introduction to Addictions course as a “special topic.” Initially, the College had anticipated low demand in this offering and had planned to offer it as a small seminar type course. However, demand for this course was immediate and WCCC actually had to increase the size of the class for this course. The College will consider options over the next six months on possibly pursuing a degree for this area. It would require C & I committee consideration, Board of Trustee approval and approval by the President’s council. It is our hope that this program could possibly be considered for the 2018-19 academic year.

### Reexamination of Program Goals

As part of its review of academic programs to reduce the number of credits to 60 for most academic programs, the C & I Committee also discussed program and course goals. In some cases, programs had a long list of program goals that had not been updated in a number of years. In other cases, the program goals no longer reflected the latest technology or modes of delivery. Faculty and Teaching Administrators worked during 2015-2016 to modify and simplify [program goals](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Course-Program%20Goal%20Matrixes.docx). In most cases, program goals were streamlined to four to seven goals.

### Standardized Course Syllabi Template

WCCC has used syllabi templates over the past decade. With an enhanced focus on assessment, and in conjunction with the strategic plan, all syllabi were reviewed in 2015-16 for the relationship between learning goals and assessment tools (this effort was consistent with the recommendations in the Consultant’s Report on Assessment). This review resulted in a revised standardized Master Course Syllabi Template (see a [Master Course Syllabi Sample](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Master%20Course%20Syllabi%20Sample.pdf)), which incorporates the means of assessment for each course goals. All course objectives and program goals were reviewed (and revised as appropriate) to ensure that student-learning outcomes were congruent with the institution’s mission, goals, and policies.

Beginning in 2016-17, the faculty annual evaluation was redesigned to focus on course assessment using the[[Instructor Outcomes Assessment template](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Instructor%20Outcomes%20Assessment%20Form.docx).](file:///\\wcccsvr06\staffdocs\pratt\Middle%20States\2018%20Self-Study\Appendices\Chap%203\Instructor%20Outcomes%20Assessment%20Form.docx) This is discussed further under Standard V.

Also during 2015-16, faculty, using the [General Education Course Goal Template](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\General%20Education%20Learning%20Goals.docx), updated the [crosswalk](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Crosswalk%20of%20WCCC%20Courses%20to%20State%20General%20Education%20Goals.docx) between WCCC’s general education courses and the [Approved NJ General Education Goals](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\NJCC%20General%20Education%20Requirements.docx). These goals were last updated by NJ President’s Council in 2012

### Public Information on Academic Programs

Academic programs are listed in the College catalog and on the website. Each program has a program sheet that is posted on the College’s website under [Programs of Study](http://www.warren.edu/programs-of-study/). Standardized course syllabi are available on the webpage under Academics ([Course Syllabi](http://www.warren.edu/course-syllabi/)) [[11]](#footnote-11). These syllabi help students understand the topics to be discussed, the intended goals of the class, and the expectations for the course. They are also extremely helpful for institutions receiving WCCC transfer students to determine the transferability of courses outside of NJ.

Students who have matriculated have online access to their individual Advising Worksheet that explains what courses have been completed and what is still needed in order to complete their degree program. Students can also use the major exploration resource to seeing the results if they change their major. They can also use the GPA calculator tool to see the impact of specific grades for the upcoming semester on their overall GPA.

### 

### WCCC Teaching Professionals

WCCC recruits, interviews, and employs professionals who are appropriately trained and academically prepared to teach courses within their subject matter expertise, as evidenced by their resumes, letters of interest, and official academic transcripts presented, which are evaluated at the time of hire. All teaching instructors (faculty, adjunct and staff employees) must be at least master’s prepared. The College requires proof of credentialing as part of the formal background check process.

As of fall 2017, there were 20 full-time faculty at the College at the following ranks: 9 professors, 6 associate professors, 5 assistant professors. All members have been promoted above the instructor rank and many began at WCCC as adjunct faculty and all have at least a Master’s degree (eight also have doctoral degrees; five earned with the financial assistance of WCCC through the tuition reimbursement program). Currently, all faculty members are tenured. Faculty promotions are governed by [Policy 202.16](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\202.16.docx), which was revised by the Board of Trustees in March 2015 with additional educational requirements for hiring and promotion. The criteria for promotion now requires doctoral credits for the ranks of associate and full professor ranks.

There are two levels of adjunct faculty at WCCC: adjuncts and senior adjuncts. In accordance with [Policy 202.15.1](file:///\\wcccsvr06\staffdocs\pratt\Middle%20States\2018%20Self-Study\Appendices\Chap%203\202.15.1.docx), adjuncts may be considered for a senior adjunct upon application after four semesters of teaching at WCCC. Senior adjuncts must be observed in the classroom by the President and the Academic Vice President.

The headcount of on-campus, credit program teaching professionals for fall semesters over the past four years is shown in Chart III-1, which notes that the number of teaching professionals has declined, reflective of the College’s enrollment decline and employee retirement/turnover. The largest decrease has been in the number of adjuncts, as the number of class sections has decreased.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-1: WCCC Teaching Professionals by Category (Fall Semester)** | | | | |
| **Category** | **Fall 2013** | **Fall 2014** | **Fall 2015** | **Fall 2016** |
| Faculty | 22 | 21 | 21 | 20 |
| Senior Adjunct | 21 | 20 | 20 | 18 |
| Adjunct | 67 | 66 | 47 | 42 |
| Teaching Admin/Staff | 9 | 7 | 6 | 6 |

The number of students taught and average class size by instructor type are show in Chart III-2. There is not a wide variance in the average class size from semester to semester. In general, adjuncts may have some of the smaller class sizes because they teach many of the evening and late afternoon sections, which tend to be smaller.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-2*:*  Number of Students Taught (Duplicated) and Average Class Size by Instructor Type** | | | | | | | | |
| **Category** | **Fall 2013** | | **Fall 2014** | | **Fall 2015** | | **Fall 2016** | |
| Adjuncts | 1,823 | 17.5 | 1,647 | 15.5 | 1,257 | 15.7 | 962 | 14.6 |
| Senior Adjuncts | 947 | 18.2 | 827 | 20.2 | 772 | 20.3 | 755 | 18.9 |
| Faculty | 2,101 | 19.5 | 2,007 | 18.2 | 1,863 | 18.1 | 1788 | 19.9 |
| Teaching Admin/Staff | 395 | 18.0 | 428 | 17.8 | 385 | 16.7 | 319 | 19.9 |

### Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

Full-time faculty are covered under the Warren County College Faculty Association NJEA collective bargaining agreement (“[Faculty Contract](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Faculty%20Contract%202015-2019.pdf)”). For items not specified in the Faculty Contract, Board of Trustee policies govern employment matters.

The Faculty Contract calls for a 15-credit teaching/workload. The teaching load values for types of courses are specified in the negotiated agreement. With a very small academic administration, WCCC relies on the expertise of its teaching professionals for the hiring, evaluation and oversight of adjunct faculty. These individuals are referred to as Area Chairs. Faculty who serve as Area Chairs are credited with six credits of teaching load per semester for those responsibilities. There currently are four faculty serving as Area Chairs (with certain area chair responsibilities also shared by certain administrative staff). Faculty also receive one credit release/overload for chairing a Committee (see Chapter VII for a list of campus committees and in the Enterprise Leadership Team governance model). In addition, faculty who serve as active club advisors receive one credit release/overload for such duties. Individual faculty contracts are issued prior to each semester with the in-load assignments and any overload responsibilities.

Adjunct faculty may teach up to 12 credits per semester, although most have a lower teaching load. They do not have committee assignments, but are welcome to participate in any ad hoc committee and attend college In-Service trainings. Adjunct faculty have group office areas with dedicated computing, photocopying and printing resources.[[12]](#footnote-12) The [Faculty Handbook](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Faculty%20Handbook%202017-18.docx) covers the basic responsibilities of adjunct faculty. It is shared with adjuncts at the fall and spring semester kick-off sessions. It contains relevant Board policies, along with basic procedural information and good practice suggestion.

### Teaching Administrators

As a small college with less than 65 full-time employees, WCCC faces a unique challenge in managing workload during peak periods. While the College relies on part-time personnel in certain areas (such as tutoring and the science labs), it has found that the best solution for staffing other areas has been to hire a teaching administrator to handle both administrative tasks and teaching responsibilities. Teaching administrators are full-time 12-month positions with both administrative and teaching duties. Most have been promoted up through the adjunct ranks. Each has a specific part-time responsibility along with up to a 12-credit semester teaching load during the fall and spring semesters. WCCC’s teaching administrator model has been featured as a model of best practice at both the AACC Conference and the ACCT Trustee Congress as well as the NJCCC President's Council as a model for sustainability (see [ACCT presentation](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\ACCT%20Presentation-Teaching%20Administrators.pdf)). This type of position enables WCCC to offer both direct instruction to students as well as supplemental services, in accordance with MSCHE’s standards regarding teaching professionals.

Teaching Administrators attend Academic meetings and three currently undertake Area Chair responsibilities for specific programs. Currently, there are five teaching administrators, three of whom are part-time Student Services advisors (and teach in Business/Communications, Art, and Biology). The Nursing Teaching Administrator and the Economics/Mathematics Teaching Administrator have special duties during the summer and winter break periods. A previous teaching administrator taught in Criminal Justice and acted as the College’s Director of Security. These hybrid positions have greatly enhanced the flexibility of the College in meeting the ever-changing staffing needs at a small community college.

The WCC model is unique in its emphasis on the original model of higher education that emphasized the dual teaching/administrating roles. The Teaching Administrator model is used at several other NJ colleges, especially Rowan College at Burlington County and Ocean County College. While there have been legal challenges from the faculty unions at these schools, a NJ Administrative Law judge ruled that this type of non-tenured teaching position was not in violation of Faculty Contract or tenure laws. There is an unfair labor practice pending at several community colleges regarding the use of this type of position, including one filed by the WCCC Faculty Association. At the time of the writing of this report, no decision has been made in this matter.

### Evaluation of WCCC Teaching Professionals

Teaching professionals are annually reviewed by the Chief Academic Officer, and/or an Area Chairs to determine teaching effectiveness through the [Faculty Observation Form](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Faculty%20ObservationTemplate%202017-2018.docx). New teaching instructors are reviewed during their first semesters. All other faculty are generally reviewed on an annual basis. Faculty observations (classroom and distance education) are conducted annually to ensure that all instructors are following the course goals and course requirements. A written evaluation form is provided to the instructor. Suggested areas of improvement are documented and discussed. The observation process allows the academic officers an opportunity to examine whether or not the espoused instructional and assessment plans are being used.

All teaching professionals participate in the student evaluation process at least once a year (adjunct faculty participate each semester). Until 2016, WCCC used the SUMMA instrument to gauge student input. Beginning in 2016, the College began using an instrument developed by [College Survey Services (CSS)](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\CSS%20Student%20Survey.pdf) for student assessment. Both evaluation instruments included the average instructor scoring, the department scoring and the college-wide score for a selection of variables. The process also allows for written student feedback. Instructors receive copies of their course evaluations after the semester has ended. Assessment results also are reviewed by Area Chairs and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Those scoring below average receive feedback to enhance future instructor performance.

### Professional Development

All full-time teaching professionals participate in fall and spring kick-off sessions and the two annual In-Service sessions. Monthly Academic meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month. There is also an end of semester retreat in lieu of May and June faculty meetings.

Faculty are encouraged and financially supported to take advantage of opportunities for professional development. The Faculty Professional Development Committee reviews faculty requests for travel and makes recommendations to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for the allocation of travel funds. Since its creation in 2013, all recommended faculty professional development requests have been approved. Upon return from the professional development activity, the faculty members provide a brief oral report to the Board of Trustees on the results of their professional development activities. Faculty share information gathered from professional development with colleagues as appropriate at Academic meetings.

The College also provides tuition reimbursement for additional degree attainment. Since 2004:

* 7 faculty/former faculty have earned doctorates
* 3 faculty have earned master’s degrees (second)
* 2 are in the process of earning advanced degrees

WCCC pays the tuition and fee costs up to the Rutgers’ tuition rate and generally provides a total of between $50,000 and $60,000 per year in the form of tuition reimbursement. For many faculty, this covers nearly all of the costs of their graduate education. WCCC has one of the more generous tuition reimbursement policies in the NJ Community College sector. Tuition reimbursement rules are included in the Faculty Contract and in [Policy 201.10-Tuition Reimbursement.](E:\\Final Report\\Standard 3 Links\\201.10.docx)

### General Education

* General Education Standards

The [Approved NJ General Education Goals](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\NJCC%20General%20Education%20Requirements.docx) was established by the NJ Council of Community Colleges in a framework that approved by the NJ President’s Council for the transferability of courses to senior NJ institutions in accordance with [the statewide transfer agreement](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Comprehensive-Transfer-Agreement.pdf). This agreement was implemented after approval of a statewide transfer law. Students can find transfer equivalencies using the NJ Transfer site ([https://www.NJtransfer.org/](https://www.njtransfer.org/)).

The requirements for general education at all NJ community colleges is as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-3: NJ General Education Credits Required by Degree Type** | | | | |
| **Subject Area** | **AA** | **AS** | **AAS, AFA, AS Nursing** | **Certificate** |
| Communications | 9 | 6 | 6 | 3 |
| Mathematics – Science – Technology | 12 | 9 | 3 | 3 |
| Social Science | 6 | 3 | 3 |  |
| Humanities | 9 | 3 |  |
| History | 6 |  |  |  |
| Diversity courses | 3 |  |  |  |
| Unassigned general education credit |  | 6 | 8 |  |
| Total General Education Credits | 45 | 30 | 20 | 6 |

All general education program requirements are published in the catalog and on the website under each program of study. Students may view the general education requirements for their major by checking their Advising Worksheet under My Warren. Some courses may apply to more than one category (for example, history and humanities). A student may not count a course in more than one category. The EX system advising module has advising trees that ensure that student general education courses are counted in the appropriate general education areas. In addition, before each student graduates, a degree audit also is completed to verify that all general education requirements are met.

* General Education Core Competencies and Learning Goals

Each course syllabus defines which NJ general education core competencies are covered in the course. The syllabus also has a section that details the learning goals for each course along with the specific suggested means of assessment. Some of the learning goals relate directly to a general education competency; others may relate to the subject matter. Most general education courses cover multiple competencies; for example, a number of courses cover information literacy or critical thinking, although they are not designated specifically for that purpose.

Ensuring comparable general education goals and outcomes have been an important issue in the NJ community college sector. A statewide general education task force, which included faculty and staff across the sector, made recommendations on appropriate student learning outcomes for the highest enrolled general education courses. These goals and outcomes were affirmed by the Community College Presidents in 2016. In 2016-17, all community colleges were required to submit a rubric that detailed the relationship between the state core student learning outcomes, the related institutional learning goals and assessment tools ([NJCCC Core Student Learning Outcomes Submission](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\NJCCC%20Core%20Student%20Learning%20Outcomes_Submission_Form%202016.docx)). This template also was used to assist faculty in reassessing all general education courses, learning outcomes and assessment tools for the common course syllabi.

* General Education Course Approval Process

General education courses are approved through the College Course Approval Process. While all new courses developed by the College must be submitted to the Course Review Committee at the NJ Council of County Colleges for funding eligibility, there is an additional step for the general education courses. These courses must also be reviewed by the General Education Committee for consistency with the state standards and then approved by the Community College Presidents. All WCCC courses have been approved through this process.

### Distance Education

Enhancing distance education is one of the priorities of Strategic Plan 2020. Distance education courses are administered in accordance with [Policy 405 Distance Education](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\405.docx). Although WCCC is authorized by MSCHE to offer distance education programs, in practice, there are no students taking a complete online schedule. Most students augment in-person classes with one or more online offerings. Chart III-4 indicates fall semester online enrollment.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-4: Distance Education Credit and Student Data** | | | | |
| **Fall** | **Total number of credits in online classes** | **Online credits as a % of total credits** | **Unduplicated headcount of students in online courses** | **Average online credits taken by an online student** |
| 2012 | 1973 | 9.5% | 458 | 4.3 |
| 2013 | 1350 | 6.5% | 304 | 4.4 |
| 2014 | 1908 | 12.3% | 458 | 4.7 |
| 2015 | 1995 | 14.9% | 519 | 3.8 |
| 2016 | 1056 | 8.5% | 255 | 4.1 |

The number of online sections offered has clearly dropped, commensurate with the College’s enrollment decline, which led to fewer course/section offerings. In addition, the College eliminated FYE 101 (Foundations of Success course in 2016), which helps explain the significant reduction in online enrollments in 2016.[[13]](#footnote-13) The average distance education course load for students has consistently been around four credits per semester.

In fall 2015, WCCC implemented a new Learning Management System (Jenzabar eLearning) that provides the necessary tools and capabilities for a quality online experience for its students. The system, part of the Jenzabar Internet Campus Solution (JICS), integrates with the web portal services offered to students with the ERP system (particularly attendance, grading, and scheduling).

As part of the transition to eLearning, WCCC restructured an administrative position, Dean of Academics, to focus primarily on distance education. The first activity was the creation and implementation of a universal design standard for all online courses to promote content consistency across all courses. Each online course shell has a [Student eLearning Tutorial](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\WCCC%20Student%20%20eLearning%20Tutorial.pdf) to assist students in both online and in-person classes to use the e-Learning portal. All faculty are encouraged to incorporate the eLearning system into their courses (as a document repository and for grading purposes). A [Distance Education Faculty Manual](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\WCCC%20Distance%20Education%20Faculty%20Handbook%202017-2018.pdf) is distributed to all faculty. At the very least, the expectation is that the e-Learning Class can be set up to organize materials for students and faculty, including the posting of the course syllabi, assignments, and documents as well as the recording of attendance and grades.

In addition to the e-Learning Manual, all distance learning instructors must complete a required 3-hour training and assessment program before online classes are officially assigned. In addition, a 6-hour/2 session “toolkit for teaching” program was developed. It is offered to new, incoming faculty to help promote best practice in lesson planning, teaching, and assessment. Training can be held in either group or individual sessions, depending on the preference of the instructor. Appropriate resources are in place prior to the start of the classes to ensure that the online courses can be offered in the most effective manner.

In addition to the training sessions, faculty are given a [Pre-Class Checklist](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Pre-Class%20Checklist%20for%20On-line%20Courses.docx) of items that must be completed prior to the start of the semester. Among other things, this checklist requires that all courses be populated with the entire semester’s itinerary prior to the start of the semester. The Acting Vice President of Academic Services follows up with online instructors to ensure that courses are set up correctly prior to the start of the semester. The College also created a [Distance Education Audit Sheet](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Distance%20Education%20Audit%20Sheet.xlsx) for faculty to validate that the online courses contain the same rigor and time commitments as in-person classes. Distance education faculty are evaluated through the [Distance Education Faculty Evaluation Tool](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Distance%20Education%20Faculty%20Evaluation%20Tool.pdf). In addition, there are training programs and online tutorials for students, faculty, and staff to ensure that users understand how to use the LMS system. Lastly, the Teaching, Learning Technology Roundtable Committee meets monthly to discuss technology issues related to online courses.

The College’s focus on improving distance education courses has resulted in a general success in online instruction pass rates since 2013 as shown in Chart III-5:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-5: Distance Education Fall Semester Pass Rates** | | | | |
|  | **Fall 2013** | **Fall 2014** | **Fall 2015** | **Fall 2016** |
| Number of Students | 552 | 480 | 415 | 352 |
| Number of Passing Grades | 345 | 336 | 318 | 257 |
| Pass Rate | 63% | 70% | 77% | 73% |

### Delivery of Instructional Services

The College reviews prior semester enrollment and prior year demand in setting the course schedule each semester. Given the significant fluctuation in enrollment over the past five years, it is especially important to ensure that the College offers a schedule that works for students and is cost-effective for the College given the limited number of classrooms available for instruction.

Most WCCC courses are delivered through on-campus courses. The number of sections has declined, commensurate with the College’s enrollment decline. The College has also been more efficient in managing class size, which has led to fewer sections. Chart III-6 indicates that the number of sections has decreased from 286 in fall 2013 to 212 by fall 2016. A portion of this decrease relates to the elimination of the First Year Experience (FYE) class, which is discussed further in Chapter 4.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-6 Number of Sections by Delivery Type** | | | | |
| **Type of Section** | **Fall 2013** | **Fall 2014** | **Fall 2015** | **Fall 2016** |
| Independent Study | 10 | 19 | 15 | 8 |
| On-Campus | 214 | 215 | 185 | 179 |
| Web-Hybrid | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| Web | 37 | 27 | 29 | 17 |
| FYE | 14 | 13 | 10 | n/a |
| Powerpack (Weekend) | 5 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Total Sections | 286 | 281 | 244 | 212 |

The College also annually reviews elements such as the average class sizes by section type and the average class size by course type (See data on [Delivery of Instructional Services](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Delivery%20of%20Instructional%20Services%20Information.docx)). WCCC has a limited number of classrooms. Therefore, the annual analysis of class size and student demand information helps to determine the scheduling and timing of future semester courses. Of particular concern in scheduling is the enrollment/demand for courses by time blocks. Chart III-6 indicates average class size by start time.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-6: Average Class Size by Class Start Time** | | | | |
|  | **Fall 2013** | **Fall 2014** | **Fall 2015** | **Fall 2016** |
| 8:00 am -9:00 am | 19.4 | 20.0 | 19.9 | 17.2 |
| 9:30 am -10:30 am | 22.6 | 20.3 | 19.2 | 18.8 |
| 11:00 am - 12:30 pm | 22.9 | 21.3 | 21.2 | 26.8 |
| 1:00 pm- 3:30 pm | 18.8 | 16.6 | 18.1 | 17.4 |
| 4:00 pm -5:30 pm\* | 12.7 | 10.9 | 11.6 | 9.4 |
| 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm | 14.5 | 16.9 | 17.5 | 13.5 |
| Average | 19.2 | 18.4 | 18.6 | 18.6 |

\*Automotive Technology and Food and Beverage courses offered at the Warren County Technical High School.

**Use of Data for Scheduling**

The data in the previous section are the types of information that help the College re-examined course scheduling for upcoming semesters. One issue that students have often raised was that different start and finish times for courses limited student choice (especially during evenings and peak times). Remedial courses and science courses often overlapped other sections, inhibiting some students from taking a full-course load. Students with limited transportation options (particularly those relying on the local bus) also had difficulty with the start or finish time of courses.

In fall 2015, the College established [standardized scheduling blocks](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Standardized%20Scheduling%20Blocks.pdf) that called for consistent start times for courses and the realignment of higher enrollment courses to the most popular times. Because WCCC has limited classroom space, it makes sense to schedule courses at the times that are most desired for students. This change has moved certain smaller major classes to alternative times. The realignment was reviewed with the faculty, who provided valuable insight on the sequencing of certain courses in their majors under the new scheduling blocks. In addition, in accordance with the Faculty Contract, the proposed schedule is shared with faculty and teaching administrators three weeks before registration begins. Instructors indicate their teaching preferences so that assignments can be made prior to the opening of registration.

### Dual Enrollment

The Dual Enrollment Program, a partnership between WCCC and all six county high schools, provides an opportunity for high school students to earn high school and college credit simultaneously. Unlike every other NJ community college, WCCC offers these courses at no cost to the student. This has resulted in significantly higher student, parent, and high school interest and participation in the program than at other NJ community colleges.

Each dual enrollment course is approved by individual teaching faculty at the College, after a review of the syllabus and other teaching materials. In addition to Advanced Placement Courses, WCCC’s dual enrollment program has expanded to include general education courses and electives. Dual enrollment faculty are subject to the same credential requirement as WCCC on-campus instructors. All instructors must be master’s prepared (or supervised by a master’s prepared instructor and certified to teach in their discipline. (See the [Dual Enrollment information packet](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Dual%20Enrollment%20Information.pdf).).

Students enrolled in a high school course approved as a dual enrollment course receive college credit provided they earn a final grade of C or better in the course. Collectively, there are 48 high school courses approved for dual enrollment. Students can obtain information about dual enrollment through guidance counselors, high school website, and WCCC’s web site (<http://www.warren.edu/wccc-dual-enrollment-program/>). Information is also distributed to families through the high schools and the WCCC course brochure.

College credit earned through dual enrollment can be applied toward a WCCC program of study or may be transferred to another institution. Over the past several years, as shown on the next chart, the number of students participating in the dual enrollment program has expanded dramatically. A Dual Enrollment Coordinator was hired to focus on reinstating/instating the program in two Warren County high schools and expanding dual enrollment to include more general education courses, particularly in the humanities and social sciences.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-7: High School Dual Enrollment Credits, Students and Sections** | | | |
| **Year** | **Credits** | **Unduplicated Students** | **Course Sections** |
| 2011-12 | 2,751 | 415 | 31 |
| 2012-13 | 3,552 | 461 | 48 |
| 2013-14 | 4,763 | 644 | 59 |
| 2014-15 | 8,772 | 1,448 | 87 |
| 2015-16 | 10,047 | 1,701 | 104 |
| 2016-17 | 10,525 | 1,750 | 102 |

The increase in the number of students participating in the program in 2015-16 is especially impressive given that the number students at Warren County high schools in 2015-16 was 5,213.[[14]](#footnote-14) This means that the program serves just under 33% of the high school students in Warren County in 2015-16. Data for 2016-17 high school students is not yet available.

Warren County Community College is one of ten NJ public and private colleges that is a member of the National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), an accreditation agency for Dual-Concurrent Enrollment. College officials actively participate in this organization. Although NJ institutions do not participate in the NACEP accreditation process, WCCC plans to use “best practices” from this process to enhance its dual enrollment services.

* **Evaluation of Dual Enrollment**

Each dual enrollment course must have both mid-term and final exams on file with the College. The contract for dual enrollment also calls for the College to be able to observe any dual enrollment class. However, given the complexity of NJ teachers’ contracts and the rules and regulations of NJ school districts (including graduation requirements and PARCC tests), the College has reviewed outcomes of dual enrollment in terms of the subsequent success of dual enrollment students by those who matriculate at WCCC.

The dual enrollment program has been overseen by a coordinator since 2013. In November 2017, the College hired a former Director of Guidance from a local high school with a Supervisor’s Certificate to oversee the program. This ensures that evaluations at local high schools can take place.

* **Matriculation of Dual Enrollment Students**

Prior to 2015-16, a relatively small number of dual enrollment students attended WCCC (approximately 20-30 students). However, with the expansion of the program to include additional general education courses, the number of dual enrollment students grew to a level where analytics could be used for the 2015-16 entering student cohort. As Chart III-8 indicates, 79 students from the students from the 2015 new student cohort previously earned dual enrollment credit. These students, using the 2015-16 tuition rate, saved nearly $65,000 in WCCC tuition from taking dual courses.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-8: Fall 2015 New Student Cohort** | | | |
|  | **Full-Time** | **Part-Time** | **Total** |
| Total Students | 235 | 75 | 310 |
| Dual | 66 | 13 | 79 |
| Dual as a % of Enrollment | 28% | 17% | 25% |
| Total Dual Credits | 383 | 59 | 442 |
| Savings from Dual ($147/cr.) | $ 56,301 | $8,673 | $64,974 |

The College examined the success of the dual students, particularly the entering full-time class. The results of the 2015-16 entering student cohort is very positive, showing that dual enrollment students have a better retention rate than students who did not attend these courses. The retention and graduation rates for the fall 2015 entering class is shown in Chart III-9. The data indicate that the attendance in a dual enrollment course increases student success, even if a student completed just one elective. This chart indicates a two-year graduation rate of 30% for dual enrollment students in that cohort.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-9: Fall 2015 Full-Time Cohort Retention Rates:**  **Prior Dual Enrollment vs. Non-Dual Students** | | | |
|  | Non-Dual | Dual | Total First-Time |
| Enrollment | 172 | 66 | 238 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Retained to Spring 2016 | 138 | 61 | 199 |
| % Retained 1 Semester | 80% | 92% | 85% |
|  |  |  |  |
| Retained to Fall 2016 | 113 | 52 | 165 |
| % Retained 2 Semesters | 66% | 79% | 70% |
|  |  |  |  |
| Retained to Spring 2017 | 95 | 49 | 144 |
| % Retained 3 Semesters | 55% | 74% | 61% |
|  |  |  |  |
| Graduated | 28 | 20 | 48 |
| % Graduated in 2 Years or Less | 16% | 30% | 20% |

These results are based on only one student cohort. However, the percentage of dual enrollment students in fall 2016 student cohort increased from 25% to 37%, with the number of dual enrolled students increasing to 137 students. These students saved a total of $127,449 in WCCC tuition charges, as shown in Chart III-10.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-10 Dual Students who Subsequently Enrolled at WCCC 2016-17** | | | |
|  | **Fall 2016** | **Spring 2017** | **Total** |
| Total New Students | 312 | 61 | 373 |
| Earned Dual Enrollment Credit | 124 | 13 | 137 |
| % Dual | 40% | 21% | 37% |
| Total Credits Earned | 735 | 98 | 833 |
| Value of Credits (FY17 Tuition Rate) | $112,455 | $14,994 | $127,449 |

Preliminary results from the fall 2016 entering cohort shows that the fall to spring retention rate for all dual enrollment students (full and part-time) was 87%, compared to a retention rate for non-dual students was 80%. The College will continue to monitor the results of future retention of this cohort to see if the pattern shown in the 2015-16 cohort continues. However, preliminary analytics indicate that students who successfully completed one or more college level courses in high school have a better chance of college success.

### Other High School Initiatives

In addition to dual enrollment, there are other opportunities for high school students to get a jump on a college education. Since 2003, the College has offered the Senior Option Program (SOP), which has allowed high school students to attend WCCC at discounted rates (per credit fees are waived). The Phillipsburg School District normally finances approximately 40 students per year in the SOP and nearly all successfully complete their courses. All Warren County high school students are eligible for SOP and there are normally a small number of SOP students from outside the Phillipsburg district.

During 2016-17, WCCC sponsored the Junior Option Program (JOP) through a small grant provided by Prudential. This grant provided free tuition, fees, and books for economically challenged high school juniors to attend classes on campus at WCCC. Two high schools (Phillipsburg High School and Warren County Technical High School) participated. Students who participated in the free lunch program were given preference for the program in accordance with grant guidelines.

The statistics in Chart III-11 indicate the strong success of the program. Students were spread across 19 different course sections in the afternoon or evening. Every student passed at least one course and the overall pass rate was 97%. It is hoped that grant funds will be available in the future to continue this or a similar initiative.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Chart III-11 Statistics on the JOP Program 2016-17** | |
| Number of Participants | 41 |
| Number of Students Successfully Completing at Least 1 Class | 41 |
| Number of Credits Attempted | 216 |
| Number of Credits Successfully Completed | 210 |
| Pass Rate | 97% |
| Average GPA | 3.33 |
| Number of Different Course Sections | 19 |

### Library Services

The Warren County Community College library was renovated in 2011, resulting in the addition of a balcony level and the installation of 52 thin client PCs for student use. This renovation more than doubled the public computing capability for the College.

Computer access has not been the only change in the library. Since 2006, the College has moved from a primarily print collection to a larger digital collection. In preparation for the 2011 renovation, the library staff weeded the library collection to eliminate unnecessary items from the physical collection. As shown on Chart III-12, the physical collection has decreased from 35,000 books in 2008 to 12,461 books in 2016. This chart also indicates how the College has clearly shifted its collection efforts to electronic resources.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-12 WCCC Library Collection 2006 vs. 2016** | | |
|  | **2006** | **2016** |
| Number of physical books | 35,000 | 12,461 |
| Number of physical media | 5,800 | 1,015 |
| Total physical library collection | 40,800 | 13,476 |
|  |  |  |
| Number of digital/electronic books |  | 163,418 |
| Number of digital/electronic databases |  | 29 |
| Number of digital/electronic media |  | 25,225 |
| Total electronic collection |  | 188,672 |

The number of physical media also has declined significantly, in part due to the elimination of VCR resources. As all classrooms are equipped with projectors or Smartboards, and faculty tend to rely on online educational media rather than library DVD resources.

The Library now focuses on the acquisition of electronic resources in accordance with the [library collection development plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Library%20Collection%20Development%20Plan.docx). Access to electronic resources has increased dramatically over the past several years. WCCC belongs to the NJ Virtual Academic Library Environment of NJ (VALE), which is a consortium to share electronic library resources, as well as OCLC for interlibrary loans and cataloging. The College also has database subscriptions and eBooks through EBSCO. In some cases, subscriptions are included in packages, so the College receives free access to various electronic books, media, and databases. However, in other cases, the College separately purchases database subscriptions. The Library tracks information regarding [database access information](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Library%20Database%20Access%20Information.xlsx) and adjusts subscriptions accordingly.

With the change in focus from print to electronic media, the ability of students to access online resources is particularly important. All the relevant information to assist students can be found on the library’s webpage, which can be accessed from a tab at the top of the College’s home page at www.warren.edu. All students have access to the online databases by signing on using their WCCC network accounts. Information on accessing accounts is found electronically in the [library guide](http://warren.libguides.com/usernames). Accounts are active as long as the student has been registered at WCCC within the last year. Access to databases is through the Library site, which uses a proxy server. The Library’s website also includes links to various important information, such as citation guides, the Library’s catalog, and information about the library’s collections. A brief [information literacy](http://warren.libguides.com/content.php?pid=701925&sid=5823822) tutorial is also available along with a new section on [fake news](http://warren.libguides.com/content.php?pid=218828&sid=5907743). This guide informs students on how to undertake effective database searches and how database materials can be cited in various citation formats.

* **Assessment of Library Services**

Prior assessment of library services focused on statistics such as the number of patrons who visited or the number of materials in circulation. With the change in collection strategy in favor of electronic resources, the assessment of library services has changed as well.

As noted above, electronic database usage is monitored monthly and the cost per search is calculated for separately purchased databases. The Library Coordinator works with faculty to determine specific electronic or print documents for their programs. In addition to faculty demand, subscription usage often determines whether the separate electronic media will be purchased in subsequent years.

The Library Coordinator provides a leadership role in the College’s information literacy efforts for students. Information literacy resources are provided to all students through My Warren and through the library’s web page. In addition, the Library Coordinator also provides supplemental Information Literacy sessions to English Composition classes and other classes as requested. During 2016-17, 44 information literacy sessions were provided. These sessions are periodically evaluated to determine their effectiveness for students. During the 2015-16 academic year, the Library Coordinator collected data from students and faculty to be used in the [Information Literacy Assessment](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\WCCC%20Information%20Literacy%20Assessment.xlsx). This was a component of the overall assessment of general education at the College.

The proliferation of questionable news sources has made learning and achieving informational literacy especially valuable for students. For this reason, it has been an area of increasing importance in the general education courses. While appropriate citation format is important, it is clear that evaluation of the veracity of sources will be a challenge for all colleges and universities in the coming years.

### Instructional Support Center

The Instructional Support Center (ISC), located across from the library provides tutoring, testing, and test preparation services to Warren County Community College students. The ISC includes 16 PCs for testing, 12 laptops for tutoring, and 10 loaner laptops.

* **Testing Services**

The ISC offers testing services for students, including initial student placement testing. WCCC uses ACCUPLACER for its placement test. As noted in the College’s Strategic Plan, the College has explored options in lieu of placing students solely based on ACCUPLACER Scores. This is based in part on the Board’s assessment of the testing process. At its 2014 March Retreat, Board members individually completed the ACCUPLACER test. Their concerns, together with staff concerns regarding this instrument[[15]](#footnote-15), led to an exploration of alternative assessments for college readiness. In the Strategic Plan, the Board approved alternate competencies, including high school proficiency to determine college placement. The result has been additional students placing into college-level courses (discussed more completely under Standard V) and the reduction in placement testing, particularly for English. For example, in 2014 there were 317 English placement tests taken; in 2016, that number dropped to 146 in 2016.

The ISC also offers testing for various external tests (including PROV and DSST) as well as proctored testing for other colleges. Most importantly, it offers [proctored testing for WCCC courses](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Proctored%20Test%20Deposit%20Form-Revised%20Feb%202017.pdf). The ISC provides approximately 300 proctored tests each semester. Many of these tests are for students with ADA accommodations, however make-up testing is also offered through the ISC as requested by instructors.

* **Tutoring Services**

Tutoring is offered free of charge through the ISC to all students for each course in which they are enrolled. Students can schedule appointments online via the online scheduling tool. Tutoring is available Monday through Thursday from 9 am to 9 pm, Friday from 9 am to 5pm. The ISC has previously offered Saturday tutoring, but there has been little to no demand for this service over the past three semesters.

WCCC uses both professional tutors (persons with associates through doctoral degrees) and peer tutors (current students who have been pre-qualified by faculty) to tutor in their subject areas. Tutors are compensated based on the degree level earned. Most tutoring sessions are individual sessions offered by professional tutors. Occasional group sessions tend to focus on popular topics (such as citation styles). Tutoring hours by major subject area are shown in Chart III-13:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **III-13: Tutoring Hours 2015-16 vs. 2016-17** | | | | | | |
|  | **Remedial Math** | **Remedial English** | **College Math** | **College English** | **All Other** | **Total** |
| Fall 2015 | 656 | 171 | 267 | 152 | 592 | 1,838 |
| Spring 2016 | 456 | 298 | 687 | 137 | 869 | 2,447 |
| Total, 2015-16 | 1,112 | 469 | 954 | 289 | 1,461 | 4,285 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fall 2016 | 224 | 74 | 457 | 245 | 454 | 1,454 |
| Spring 2017 | 83 | 5 | 665 | 162 | 400 | 1,315 |
| Total, 2016-17 | 307 | 79 | 1,122 | 407 | 854 | 2,769 |
| Change | (805) | (390) | 168 | 118 | (607) | (1,516) |
| % Change | -72% | -83% | 18% | 41% | -42% | -35% |

As Chart III-13 notes, tutoring hours have declined. The largest decrease has been in remedial education (which is discussed in more detail under Standard V). The increase in college mathematics and English tutoring conversely reflects more students attempting college level instead of remedial level classes in these subjects. The decrease in “all other” is a very misleading as group science sessions were counted as individual hours in 2015-16 (example: if four students participated in a one-hour group session, they were counted as four hours).[[16]](#footnote-16) The College now uses the electronic calendaring system to track tutoring hours rather than relying on manual appointment scheduling.

In FY17, the College restructured the management of the ISC to enhance the working relationship between the ISC and instructors and to improve the assessment of tutoring and testing support services. A Student Services lead advisor was reassigned to manage the ISC in July 2016. This change has generated very positive feedback from faculty and students.

One challenge with tutoring services is scheduling tutors and students. Three years ago, the College began using an online appointments calendar so that students could request appointments and see the availability of tutoring in various subject areas. This system could also track cancelled appointments and be used to extract statistics about appointments.

At the same time that the web-based scheduling system was implemented, the College subscribed to Smarthinking for a two-year period, with the idea that it could assist students when the tutoring center was closed. However, that service had nearly no usage as students preferred to come in and meet with a tutor. Online tutoring also was very difficult for students who were truly lost in a course. In FY17, the College ended this service. However, the College has had more success with the online review of student papers. Students are able to submit a paper for tutor review and receive a 24-hour turn-around in lieu of a one-on-one session with a tutor.

Other ISC enhancements have included the restructuring of the physical space in the ISC. The ISC space has been doubled to allow more work areas for individual and group tutoring. There are also private areas for students who need accommodations for either additional time for test-taking or supplemental assistance (such as a scribe or a reader) to complete an assessment. There is a separate proctored testing room for online testing. During 2017-18, the College will open the new Building Annex. This facility will include an expanded learning lab for students that will complement ISC services.

* **Evaluation of Tutoring Services**

It is somewhat difficult to gauge the effectiveness of tutoring services because students all have different intended outcomes for tutoring. In some cases, a student needs assistance with a particular skill or concept and needs limited tutoring assistance. In other cases, a student may require educational accommodations and has a standing appointment with a tutor several hours a week during the entire semester. Some students are doing well and seek to raise their grade in a specific class. Others attend tutoring only when they are notified that they are in danger of failing a course. In a few occasions, tutoring may convince a student that withdrawing without academic penalty is the best course of action at this time because the student is behind in a subject (this is particularly true of mathematics tutoring).

Because most tutoring is individualized, there is the ability to give feedback to the instructor on the tutoring session. Since 2014, tutors have been e-mailing faculty Tutoring Session Reports, briefly indicating what was covered in the session and whether the student seemed to be making progress. This feedback can be very helpful to faculty, especially if there are multiple students who may be challenged by the same skill or concept. These reports can also assist faculty who are working individually with a student.

In addition to the tutoring reports, the ISC has begun to look at statistics on grade improvement for students who had been identified based on spring 2017 mid-term grades as being in danger of failing a class. As the chart on the next page indicates, nearly half of those students were able to improve grades. However, as the chart also notes, these students represent only 27% of the 195 students who received tutoring in the spring 2017 term.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-14: Academic Recovery Students: Tutoring Results Spring 2017** | | |
|  | Students | % of Total |
| **Students with D or F at Midterm who attended tutoring** | **53** | **100%** |
| Mid-Term to Final Grade Improvement | 25 | 47% |
| Stopped Attending or Withdrew | 18 | 34% |
| No Grade Change Midterm through Final Exam | 9 | 17% |
| D at Mid-Term, Final Grade of F | 1 | 2% |

The ISC also has used student satisfaction information to gauge the effectiveness of services. In addition to the overall [Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory Survey (SSI)](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Noel%20Levitz%202015%20Findings.pdf), which is undertaken periodically by the College, the ISC has asked students to complete comment cards. As most students do not complete these, in spring of 2017, the ISC sent out an e-mail survey to students who had used the ISC services for tutoring. Forty students responded as shown in Chart III-15.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart III-15: Summary of ISC Spring 2017 Survey**  **40 Respondents (%s are Rounded)** | | | | | |
| **Was the ISC Academically Helpful?** | | |  | |  |
|  | Yes | No | Unsure |  | |
|  | 38 | 1 | 1 |  | |
|  | 95% | 3% | 3% |  | |
| **How would you Rate Services (1 = Positive; 5 = Negative)** | | | |  | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 33 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | |
| 83% | 10% | 3% | 5% | 0% | |

During this same semester (spring 2017), faculty were surveyed regarding their views of the ISC. In that survey, 21 of the 26 respondents (81%) indicated that the ISC’s tutoring efforts were effective or extremely effective. Only three respondents indicated that the tutoring was “somewhat effective.” No respondents indicated that the tutoring was “not effective.” Surveys regarding fall 2017 services will be made available to students in January 2018.

### Continuing Education Programs and Services

Continuing Education, the noncredit division of the College, is designed to address the College’s goal of offering a wide variety of opportunities to meet the varied needs of life-long learners in Warren County, including:

* Career training for a variety of healthcare, trade, and business professions
* Workforce development programs to support the needs of employed individuals and area businesses
* Professional development workshops
* Customized training offerings for local businesses
* Personal development programs, including Active Adult 55+ classes, personal enrichment, online courses, and summer youth enrichment programs
* Support of emergency service training for Warren County

There are over 2,500 total registrations in the Continuing Education Division’s programs and services. Day and evening programs are offered throughout the year, with youth enrichment programs offered at both locations during the summer months. As noted in Chart III-16, Continuing Education registrations have declined since FY13. Much of this decline is due to a lower number of unemployed individuals seeking training, fewer offerings in personal development courses and summer enrichment programs for youth. These are the reasons that the College has pursued a partnership with Sussex County Community College to deliver continuing education programs. The Sussex Partnership is discussed further in this chapter.

* Many state and national accrediting bodies recognize the department’s healthcare training programs. The Medical Assisting program is accredited through CAAHEP (Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs), and is one of only five programs in NJ. The Certified Nursing Assistant program is subject to strict rules established by the NJ Department of Health. WCCC’s Dental Assisting program is the only program in the region with National Entry Level Dental Assistant (NELDA) Certification through the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB), the department offers 21 other healthcare training programs that lead to certification or licensure.
* The NJ Department of Labor has approved 16 of the department’s training programs for Individual Training Grants for displaced workers eligible for WIOA funding. As noted in Chart III-17, the department’s enrollment in funded programs has seen growth through the SPT partnership, enrolling 160 students in FY 17.
* **Phillipsburg Education Center**

In August of 2011, the College opened the Phillipsburg Education Center (PEC) and reallocated WCCC Continuing Education programs to that facility. WCCC occupies approximately 20,000 of the 52,000 square ft., facility, which includes 11 classrooms/labs and office areas. In recognition of the new training opportunities offered in this area, WCCC’s Phillipsburg Education Center received the “Elizabeth Firth Wade Business Partner Award” in 2015 for providing opportunities previously unavailable in the community. The PEC also houses an office for One-Stop Youth Career Counseling. In 2016, WCCC entered into an agreement with the Morris/Sussex/Warren Employment and Training Services to locate the Warren County Youth One-Stop Career Center at the Phillipsburg Education Center. Warren County youth, ages 16 through 24, are able to make an appointment with a youth employment counselor to obtain career counseling and information regarding vocational training opportunities. Many participants are referred to the programs offered through Continuing Education, creating an onsite referral source.

A portion of the facility has been leased to external groups while approximately 6,000 sq. ft. in space is allocated to the Small Business Growth Center (SBGC). The SBGC offers office and meeting space to aspiring entrepreneurs at lower start-up rates, along with various training and support services. There were seven tenants in the facility in 2017.

In March 2017, the major tenant of the PEC, the Phillipsburg School Board of Education moved to its new location. Much of this rental space will be assumed in spring 2018 by the NJ Department of Labor’s One-Stop Career Center after a renovation, which was approved (and will be paid for) by the State of NJ, is completed. The One-Stop Career Center provides employment services for businesses and for individuals re-entering the workforce. Business services include on-the-job training assistance and referrals of applicants for job openings. Dislocated workers and those on public assistance or disability have access to grants for in-demand training programs. The relocation of this agency will significantly increase the number of student referrals to Warren County Community College. This strategic partnership also directly affects economic development of the region by offering financial and practical resources in preparing students for the workforce, which in turn, assists employers with their workforce needs.

The College also provides two classrooms in the former School District’s space to the Warren County GED program. This program is currently run by the Warren County Technical School.

* **Skylands Professional Training (SPT)**

In 2016, Warren and Sussex County Community Colleges formed a regional partnership known as Skylands Professional Training (SPT). This goal of this historic partnership is to strengthen economic and workforce development in the northwestern NJ by offering residents an opportunity to take advantage of in-demand certification programs and noncredit courses. SPT also offers customized training for area businesses to help strengthen workforce education opportunities in our region. WCCC began coordinating workforce development programs, summer youth programs, and customized training services at locations in Sussex County in fall 2016.

### Evaluation of Continuing Education Programs

The funded programs of Continuing Education are audited annually by the Morris/Sussex/Warren Workforce Development Board (WDB), which approves workforce funding to support participants in various programs. Program outcomes, including completions, placements, and retentions are reviewed annually as part of this audit. In 2014 and 2015, the WDB commended WCCC for the operations of its programs and issued no program recommendations. The 2016 audit made recommendations to add certification fees to the website used by participants for researching program offerings (see latest [WIB Audit](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\WIB%202017%20Audit%20and%20Response.pdf)).

WCCC’s annually reviews [program enrollments](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Continuing%20Education%20Enrollment.xlsx) and outcomes in the Continuing Education division to determine the viability of offerings. In some cases, the College has discontinued certain career programs because of placement concerns. In other instances, the College has seen an opportunity in the market to provide new offerings (such as new initiatives offered in FY17). In addition to the annual program reviews, the effectiveness of key noncredit programs is shown in [Continuing Education Outcomes Data](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Continuing%20Education%20Outcomes%20Data.xlsx).

The offerings in the avocational programs are based on enrollment demand. As a rule, all avocational programs must generate a profit margin of at least 30% to be considered viable. All programs (career and avocational) undergo attendee program evaluations. These evaluations are used to determine the effectiveness of the course and help the college determine future offerings.

## Summary

WCCC is a small community college with limited public resources and tuition revenues. For these reasons, the College must demonstrate to residents of Warren County and NJ that it is using resources in the most effective manner. The College routinely undertakes efforts in both its credit and noncredit programs, as well as its ancillary services, to ensure that it is providing effective services through its programs and offerings.

Although there remain areas where the College can continue to focus on continued improvement, WCCC has undertaken a number of initiatives over the past several years to enhance its educational programs. Common syllabi, enhanced learning goals, and an effort to improve student support offerings are examples of continuous improvement efforts.

## Institutional Opportunities

* The College should enhance the ongoing assessment of its growing dual enrollment program using the latest NACEP best practices and standards.
* It is important that a college’s information literacy efforts and training focus on careful evaluation of sources in the age of internet searching. WCCC should consider creating an information literacy review team of faculty and the Library Coordinator to ensure that the use of source material is covered uniformly across the General Education curriculum.
* As WCCC implements its new Academic Learning Lab in the College Annex, it should ensure that appropriate software and services are available in this center to complement current tutoring activities.

# Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

## Requirements of Affiliation

This chapter addresses the following Requirement of Affiliation:

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

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

## Overview

WCCC’s mission is to serve students from the Warren County area. WCCC was originally conceived as a “College without Walls” that brokered educational services to other colleges. Even when a permanent campus was developed, it was the desire of the community that the services and amenities focus exclusively on direct educational services. For this reason, WCCC focuses on its educational mission and does not have the types of facilities (community center, athletic facilities, pool, playing fields, performance centers, conference centers, etc.) found at other community colleges. Warren County taxpayers have made it clear that the focus of the College should remain the educational programs and they have been willing to support only educationally related facilities. The College has embraced this community value system as part of operational activities and proceeded accordingly.

Without the concern of funding and operating many ancillary services, WCCC is able to focus its efforts on its primary mission activities of retaining and graduating students. The enrollment and retention of students (and the enhancement of student success) is one of the eight priority areas identified in Strategic Plan 2020. Given its small size, WCCC is able to focus on the individual needs of students; student services and academic support personnel know many students on a first-name basis. This gives WCCC a better opportunity to provide academic support services (academic advising, tutoring, financial, and financial aid counseling) to students.

## Discussion and Analysis

### Admission and Registration

As an open admissions institution, WCCC serves any applicant who has graduated from a recognized high school, completed a secondary school education in a home school setting, earned a secondary completion credential, or demonstrated an ability to benefit in accordance with [Policy 302.1](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\302.1.docx). Non-high school graduates are evaluated based on placement test scores or high school credentials. Students concurrently attending high school must also have the permission of a parent or guardian to enroll. Anyone under the age of 16, along with their parent or guardian, must meet with the Vice President of Academic Services prior to enrolling in the College.

A student may apply online or in person to the College. A one-time $25 application fee may be paid at time of registration. Students applying online receive a welcome e-mail with instructions on how to proceed with registration and financial aid activities. Data on student applications from fall 2003 through fall 2016 are shown in Chart IV-1.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart IV-1 Student Applicant Data** | | | | |
|  | **New Students** | **Readmitted Students** | **Total Applicants** | **Total** |
| Fall 2003 | 443 | 130 | 573 | 430 |
| Fall 2004 | 548 | 181 | 729 | 515 |
| Fall 2005 | 677 | 199 | 876 | 650 |
| Fall 2006 | 703 | 204 | 907 | 712 |
| Fall 2007 | 702 | 269 | 971 | 721 |
| Fall 2008 | 721 | 232 | 953 | 684 |
| Fall 2009 | 815 | 255 | 1,070 | 727 |
| Fall 2010 | 804 | 292 | 1,096 | 793 |
| Fall 2011 | 729 | 224 | 953 | 811 |
| Fall 2012 | 665 | 272 | 937 | 765 |
| Fall 2013 | 632 | 183 | 815 | 689 |
| Fall 2014 | 638 | 196 | 834 | 666 |
| Fall 2015 | 628 | 221 | 849 | 674 |
| Fall 2016 | 787 | 173 | 960 | 604 |

WCCC provides an easy combined (“one-stop”) admission/registration process for new and readmitted students. All registration is completed through the Office of Students Services. Continuing students who have a GPA of at least 2.0 and are making academic progress may register online. Fall registration typically opens in early April, while spring registration begins in mid-November. Students may come in on a walk-in basis during hours of operation and undertake admissions, registration, placement testing and financial aid counseling in one visit to the campus. These offices are open extended hours during peak registration periods.

All new students must meet one-on-one with an advisor in order to register for classes. The advisor will explain the types of degrees offered and listen to the student’s potential education and career goals. Students are provided with program requirement worksheets and are shown how to access information electronically.

As part of the registration process, advisors may review prior high school or college transcripts (if available) to determine appropriate placement in courses. During the advising sessions, advisors review program and course requirements, discuss remediation options, create a class schedule with the student, review basic WCCC requirements, provide password/ID information, and share orientation materials. Students are also counseled to complete any financial aid requirements, to enter a payment plan or informed about the billing requirements. All new students are advised to attend a mandatory New Student Orientation to obtain additional information about college system access, online learning and policies/procedures.

Students not providing evidence of competency in English or mathematics (through college or high school transcripts or standardized test scores) are advised to take a placement test in the Instructional Support Center (ISC). Placement testing is done on a walk-in basis or may be scheduled in advance.

Online registration and online payment plan options are available in My Warren. The online degree audit feature in My Warren determines if a course meets the student’s current degree program requirements. The registration screen also will indicate whether a course is eligible for the degree program (and therefore eligible for financial aid).

### Placement into Remedial Courses

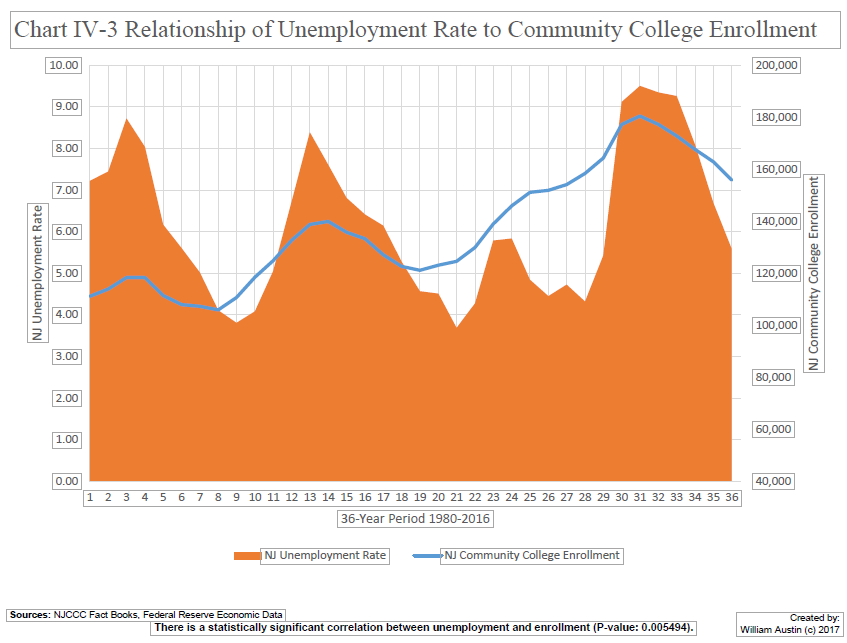
Warren County Community College strives to assist every student enrolled. To ensure students are adequately prepared for their college-level courses, students without qualifying SAT scores, 3.0 high school GPA or prior college-level courses are strongly encouraged to take the ACCUPLACER Placement test to ensure appropriate placement. Students scoring below the proficient level are placed into developmental English and/or math classes designed to prepare the student for the college-level courses. The College continues to use the original ACCUPLACER, but will transition to ACCUPLACER Next Gen when its current supply of tests is depleted.

One area that has been a key focus of WCCC over the past two years has been a realignment of remedial education. Prior to fall 2015, the College relied on ACCUPLACER results to determine course placement. However, as discussed further in Standard V, the Board of Trustees members, after taking the ACCUPLACER test during a Board Retreat in 2014, requested that additional means of determining remedial placement be made available. As a result, in fall 2015, advisors in Student Services began a more thorough analysis of high school transcripts to determine student proficiency in English and mathematics. In addition, the College allowed more students to opt out of remediation if they felt they were adequately prepared for college level courses (particularly English). The positive impact of using high school experience rather than ACCUPLACER is discussed in detail in the [English Remediation Report](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\English%20Remediation%20Report.docx). In 2016, the College restructured mathematics remediation, which significantly affected non-STEM student placement. These changes are also discussed in more detail under Standard V.

### Enrollment Data

Similar to most NJ community colleges, WCCC’s peak enrollment occurred in fall 2011. This happened to coincide with end the great recession enrollment “boomlet,” the year before Obamacare allowed non-college students to remain on parent’s healthcare plans and the last period for larger high school graduating classes in Warren County. The College’s fall on-campus 10th day enrollment information is shown in Chart IV-2.

As shown in Chart IV-3, there is a strong correlation over the past 36 years with unemployment and NJ community college sector enrollment (year 1 = 1980; Year 36 = 2016).



WCCC’s current downturn in enrollment also reflects a significant reduction in high school graduating classes since 2008. This will only marginally change, as new development is limited in Warren County due to the Highlands’s Act. Unlike some other NJ community colleges, WCCC does not envision expanding services across county borders other than through partnerships with additional institutions. For this reason, WCCC does not expect significant enrollment growth in the future.

The College’s student demographic data closely resembles the demographic profile of the Warren County region, as shown in Chart IV-4.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart IV-4: WCCC, Warren County and NJ Demographic Data** | | | |
| **Census Category** | **WCCC Fall 2016** | **Warren County 2015** | **NJ 2015** |
|
| Black | 5% | 4.7% | 14.8% |
| American Indian/Alaska Native (a) | 1% | 0.2% | .6% |
| Asian | 3% | 3.0% | 9.7% |
| White (including Hispanic/Latino) | 85% | 91.8% | 72.6% |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific Isl. | 0% | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| Two or more races/NR | 2.0% | 1.6% | 2.1% |
| Hispanic or Latino Origin | 5% | 8.7% | 19.7% |
| White (not Hispanic) | 78.6% | 90.4% | 56.2% |

Additional information about enrollment is found in the [Enrollment Report for Fall 2016](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\Enrollment%20Report%202016.pdf). Preliminary information for fall 2017 is found in the [Fall 2017 Enrollment At a Glance Report](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\Fall%202017%20Enrollment%20at%20a%20Glance.pdf).

### Transfer Policies

The College adheres to [Policy 403.4--Transfer Policy](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\403.4.docx) for students who have attended a previous college or university and will transfer courses to WCCC for comparable courses where students have earned a C or better. Transfer information is included on the WCCC website and College Catalog. Students submit official transcripts to the College, which are typically evaluated within two weeks of submission. Before any course is transferred in, the accreditation of the institution is first validated and the course is reviewed to ensure that it is consistent with a WCCC course. WCCC only accepts transfer courses from the institution that taught the course and requires an official transcript for review. Assuming the course meets these criteria, the course credits are applied to the student’s course history as transfer credits with no grade recorded. Students are mailed a copy of their transfer evaluation detailing those specific courses that were transferred. The courses are recorded on the student transcript with a transfer (TR) notation. Students may appeal any transfer decision.

To recognize the knowledge and skills of U.S. veterans, veteran students may be awarded up to 34 credits based on military experience. Credits are awarded based on ACE equivalencies and may be used to satisfy the technical electives required of the Associates of Applied Sciences (A.A.S.) in technical studies degree program, also known as the VIPER (Veterans In Pursuit of Educational Readiness) program. Veteran students submit an official military transcript to begin this process. They are advised to meet with the Veteran’s Coordinator to determine if veteran’s benefits are available to support educational expenses. The A. A. S. in technical studies may also be transferred into a baccalaureate program at Thomas Edison State University based on an agreement between Thomas Edison and Warren County Community College. Because Thomas Edison State University is an online institution, the WCCC Board of Trustees has identified the need for on-campus baccalaureate training as a regional need. WCCC is in the preliminary stages of exploring a Bachelor’s of Applied Science in technical studies. Such a program would require State of NJ and Middle States’ approval.

### Registration and Advising

As part of the initial advising process, advisors will provide students with a [program sheet](http://www.warren.edu/programs-of-study/) for their selected major and provide them with ID/passwords information, payment information and general policies of the College (in the form of the student handbook). Students may also meet with a financial aid representative during registration or speak to the Business Office about payment plan options. During the semester, students may stop in without an appointment to meet with an advisor to discuss academic matters. Evening hours are available on Wednesday and Thursday nights to help the evening student population during the academic year and on additional days during the registration period.

The Office of Student Services tracks advising sessions on an hourly, daily and monthly basis to determine staffing needs. These data have help the Office of Student Services determine staffing for upcoming periods.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart IV-5: Student Advising Sessions/Productivity** | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | **Change** | **% Change** |
|  | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2012-16** | **2012-16** |
| January | 1,419 | 1,352 | 1,170 | 1,037 | 954 | (465) | -33% |
| February | 422 | 365 | 258 | 288 | 318 | (104) | -25% |
| March | 540 | 412 | 383 | 376 | 335 | (205) | -38% |
| April | 744 | 628 | 762 | 543 | 638 | (106) | -14% |
| May | 755 | 591 | 674 | 549 | 598 | (157) | -21% |
| June | 530 | 439 | 444 | 377 | 396 | (134) | -25% |
| July | 585 | 640 | 602 | 512 | 393 | (192) | -33% |
| August | 1,187 | 929 | 1,017 | 857 | 755 | (432) | -36% |
| September | 945 | 873 | 748 | 766 | 648 | (297) | -31% |
| October | 373 | 438 | 349 | 292 | 217 | (156) | -42% |
| November | 1,022 | 875 | 704 | 724 | 803 | (219) | -21% |
| December | 492 | 485 | 610 | 545 | 534 | 42 | 9% |
| Total | 9,014 | 8,027 | 7,721 | 6,866 | 6,589 | (2,425) | -27% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Annual Undupl. Headcount | 2,451 | 2,297 | 2,086 | 1,886 | 1,629 | (822) | -34% |
| Avg. Contact Per Student | 3.68 | 3.49 | 3.70 | 3.64 | 4.04 |  |  |
| FTE Advisors | 6 | 6 | 6 | 4.5 | 3.5 |  |  |
| Sessions Per Advisor/Yr. | 409 | 382 | 348 | 419 | 465 |  |  |

### Tuition and Fees

Since 1994, the Boards of Trustees at NJ public colleges and universities have been able to set their own tuition and fee levels. There are no policies or caps on tuition, however, there have been discussion at the legislative level of capping or limiting tuition increases.

The WCCC Board of Trustees generally sets tuition and fee rates in June after the state appropriation for the community college sector are known. The College’s FY18 per credit current tuition and fee rate is $158.00. The College has maintained a practice of steady, but reasonable tuition increases, with a slight shift from fees to tuition so that financial aid students can get proportionately more in state Tuition Aid Funds (TAG). Tuition and fee increase over the past five years have ranged from 3.0% to 4.1%. The per credit tuition and fee charges since FY13 are shown on Chart IV-6.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart IV-6: Tuition and Fee Charges FY13 through FY18** | | | | | | |
| **Category** | **FY13** | **FY14** | **FY15** | **FY16** | **FY17** | **FY18** |
| Tuition | $109.25 | $114.00 | $122.00 | $127.00 | $135.00 | $140.00 |
| Fees | $23.75 | $23.00 | $20.00 | $20.00 | $18.00 | $18.00 |
| Total | $133.00 | $137.00 | $142.00 | $147.00 | $153.00 | $158.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| $ Increase |  | $4.00 | $ 5.00 | $5.00 | $6.00 | $5.00 |
| % Increase |  | 3.00% | 3.60% | 3.50% | 4.10% | 3.30% |

### WCCC Financial Aid Services

WCCC offers the following grant, loan and scholarship programs:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart IV-7: Types of Financial Aid Available at WCCC** | | |
| **Grants** | **Scholarships** | **Loans** |
| Federal Pell | NJ STARS | Subsidized Direct Loans |
| Federal SEOG | WCCC Scholarships | Unsubsidized Direct Loans |
| NJ Tuition Aid Grants (TAG) |  | Private Loans (as requested) |
| NJ EOF Grants |  |  |

General Information on financial aid programs is available on the College’s website (<http://www.warren.edu/financial-aid/>). In addition, the Veterans Assistance are available to support educational and other expenses of eligible veterans (<http://www.warren.edu/veterans-benefits/>). Students who qualify may also receive tuition or supplemental assistance from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Continuing Education students also may be eligible to receive support through Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds (WIOA).

All students interested in grants, loans, and/or scholarships must complete a FAFSA. Because of the new federal two-year lag on financial systems, beginning in 2016, students can apply in fall for the upcoming academic year. The most critical deadline dates are set by the State of NJ, which requires all renewal students to complete their FAFSA by April 15. New students must complete a FAFSA by September 15 to be eligible for either fall or spring TAG awards.

Once a student files a FAFSA, they are e-mailed a financial aid Welcome Letter. This explains any outstanding documents required and gives students instructions on how to access the EAGLE (Easy Access to Grants Loans Entry) system, which is accessible through the College’s home page. EAGLE is the College Board’s Net Partner product, which is the student portal product for the Powerfaids financial aid system used by the College (Powerfaids is integrated with the College’s Jenzabar EX modules). EAGLE allows students to view cost of attendance, documents needed, aid eligibility, disbursement history, and lifetime awards.

Students are advised to register for classes and to complete the College’s short EAGLE Application. State and federal financial aid is based on financial aid eligibility and on the number of credits attempted for a semester. Since a majority of WCCC students attend on a part-time basis, financial aid is not packaged until a student registers for a course. As a result, financial aid packaging does not begin until after the fall registration system is opened (early April). Students who have applied for aid but have not registered receive various reminders to register for classes to determine aid eligibility.

Financial Aid staff are available to assist students in filling out the FAFSA and with information on document follow-up and verification. Students may come in without an appointment during regular office hours for assistance. Staff also do periodic presentations at high schools, open houses, and new student orientations.

Once a student registers, he or she is considered for financial aid. If the student’s file is complete (and does not need additional follow-up), the student is packaged for Pell, TAG and SEOG grant assistance based on eligible degree credits enrolled that semester in their program of study. The College uses the degree audit information data synchronized from Jenzabar EX into Powerfaids to ensure that students are only packaged for eligible courses in their major.

In order to encourage responsible borrowing, students must separately apply for a Student Loan through the Student Loan Application form only after they have been notified regarding their grant status. All loan recipients must complete the student loan entrance interview on Studentloans.gov and complete a master promissory note. Loan recipients are not certified for graduation until they complete the online exit interview.

Students eligible for the state’s NJ STARS program must meet additional eligibility criteria. They students must be in the top 15% of their high school class, have completed remediation, enroll full-time and maintain an annual 3.0 GPA. Student Services tracks the progress of all NJ STARS students.

Students in the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) must go through a separate certification process. EOF funds are allocated to first generation college students who have both financial and educational need. Educational need is defined by a student requiring remediation in one or more subjects. Information regarding EOF is found later in this chapter.

Approximately one week prior to the semester, the College processes book vouchers for students who have requested them through the EAGLE application. Unless otherwise requested, the book funds are issued as a line of credit through the College’s bookstore. Vouchers are then reconciled and applied against the student’s Accounts Receivable account in the Business Office. The College monitors Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) every semester in accordance with [Policy 403.7](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\403.7.docx).

* **Financial Aid Data**

The information in Chart IV-8 indicates the number of financial aid recipients in each federal and state financial aid program. The unduplicated number of government financial aid recipients for FY16 was 665, which represents 41% of the College’s unduplicated headcount.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart IV-8 Federal and State Financial Aid Recipients by Program FY12-FY16** | | | | | | | |
| **Program** | **FY12** | **FY13** | **FY14** | **FY15** | **FY16** | **5 Year Change** | **% Change** |
| Pell | 773 | 755 | 696 | 652 | 529 | (244) | -32% |
| TAG | 255 | 231 | 241 | 235 | 152 | (103) | -40% |
| EOF | 47 | 44 | 44 | 48 | 43 | (4) | -9% |
| SEOG | 86 | 85 | 70 | 229 | 82 | (4) | -5% |
| College Work-Study | 15 | 27 | 23 | 23 | 20 | 5 | 33% |
| NJ STARS | 34 | 39 | 28 | 16 | 14 | (20) | -59% |
| Subsidized Loans | 205 | 215 | 161 | 154 | 136 | (69) | -34% |
| Unsubsidized Loans | 260 | 256 | 211 | 196 | 187 | (73) | -28% |
| Total Recipients (Unduplicated) | 1,007 | 997 | 887 | 764 | 665 | (342) | -34% |
| Total Matriculated Students | 2,145 | 2,099 | 2,004 | 1,928 | 1,781 | (364) | -17% |
| % Receiving Aid | 47% | 47% | 44% | 40% | 37% |  |  |

As the chart above notes, the number of financial aid students has declined by 34% since 2011-12. This obviously reflects enrollment changes, but also improving economic conditions since FY12, when more students qualified for aid due to the recessions. During FY16, approximately 37% of matriculated students received financial some form of financial aid. Of note is the large decrease in Pell recipients, which also can be attributed to additional restrictions on Pell grant funds. Of note is the fact that student borrowing is down since FY12.

In terms of funding, WCCC students received just over $3 million in financial aid funds, resulting in an overall average award amount of $4,200 per student. The dollars awarded by program and by year are shown in Chart IV-9.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart IV-9 Federal and State Financial Aid Disbursed by Program FY12-FY16 ($000)** | | | | | | | |
| **Program** | **FY12** | **FY13** | **FY14** | **FY15** | **FY16** | **5- Year Change** | **% Change** |
| Pell | 2,398 | 2,394 | 2,163 | 2,074 | 1,648 | -750 | -31% |
| TAG | 344 | 347 | 353 | 359 | 250 | -94 | -27% |
| EOF | 38 | 30 | 37 | 36 | 38 | 0 | 0% |
| SEOG | 46 | 43 | 43 | 82 | 40 | -6 | -13% |
| College Work-Study | 32 | 42 | 40 | 42 | 44 | 12 | 38% |
| NJ STARS | 91 | 102 | 78 | 39 | 44 | -47 | -52% |
| Subsidized Loans | 535 | 578 | 445 | 438 | 360 | -175 | -33% |
| Unsubsidized Loans | 764 | 815 | 710 | 617 | 606 | -158 | -21% |
| Total Funds | 4,248 | 4,351 | 3,869 | 3,687 | 3,030 | -1,218 | -29% |
| Avg. Funds per Student | 4,218 | 4,364 | 4,362 | 4,826 | 4,556 | 338 | 8% |

Chart IV-9 notes that the overall funding has declined, however, the aid per student has actually increased by 8%. Again, of note, is the decrease in the total amount of student loan funding borrowed during this period.

Charts IV-8 and IV-9 do not include local scholarship funds. WCCC/WCCC Foundation provides approximately $45,000 in scholarships/book awards to 45-60 Warren County residents each year. These awards range from a $200 book award to a $2,000 annual scholarship. Scholarships applications are available on the College’s website and in the Financial Aid, Student Services and the Business offices prior to fall and spring semesters. The Scholarship Selection Committee, consisting of representatives from various administrative offices, reviews applications and selects recipients each semester. The Committee endeavors to award scholarships to students who have unmet need or special financial circumstances that cannot be met through federal or state programs. Returning students also must meet minimum GPA requirements and the Committee considers prior academic performance as part of its selection process.

WCCC also provides support to veteran students. These students meet separately with the Veteran’s Coordinator as part of the registration process to determine eligibility for various veteran’s benefits. During 2016-17, 36 students used some form of veteran’s benefits. The majority of students used Chapter 33 benefits, while six students used NJ National Guard tuition waivers (accounting for $11,527 in waivers for FY 2017). General information to assist veterans is found on the [Veteran's Assistance page.](http://www.warren.edu/veterans-benefits/)

WCCC’s three-year student loan default rate for the 2014 cohort was 12.6%. This rate was virtually identical to the to the prior year rate of 12.5%

* **Financial Aid Productivity Data**

The Financial Aid office monitors its processing data on both a monthly and annual basis. The data below reflects processing for the fall semester from 2010 through 2016. The number of registered financial aid applicants reflects the College’s overall enrollment trend. Changes in verification data reflect changes in the federal process (the decline beginning in 2014, for example, reflects the use of the IRS transfer tool, which eliminated some tax document collection).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart IV-10 Financial Aid Processing Data Fall 2010-Fall 2016** | | | | | | | |
|  | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Registered Financial Aid Applicants | 991 | 1015 | 1032 | 928 | 890 | 759 | 762 |
| Students Packaged with Financial Aid | 670 | 720 | 860 | 792 | 747 | 644 | 623 |
| Bookstore Advances Processed | 350 | 550 | 689 | 496 | 598 | 490 | 454 |
| Student Loans Requested | 220 | 250 | 311 | 146 | 202 | 185 | 196 |
| Verifications Completed | 320 | 310 | 328 | 340 | 274 | 214 | 315 |

### FERPA

The College follows [Policy 306](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\306.docx) (Privacy Rights of Students) in order to protect student privacy. Upon application to the College, students are assigned a student ID number. Students inquiring as to what that ID number is must provide photo ID before the ID number will be released. FERPA is addressed at each New Student Orientation, and may be found on the WCCC website and in the Student Handbook and College Catalog. Students are given the option of completing the [Release of Information Form](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\Release-of-Information-Form.pdf) listing anyone to whom they give us permission to release information. The name of the person, along with their social security number is requested to be able to identify that individual in the future when making a request for information. Security screens have also been placed on employee computer monitors to protect student privacy in open areas.

The College has security procedures in place to protect student file information in accordance with [Policy 501.6](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\501.6.docx) (Security of Financial Information). Student files are stored for five years in the Offices of Student Services and Financial Aid in fireproof, locked cabinets that are out of the common area of the suite. All other files are stored in off-site storage. Thereafter, files are put in archives and shipped across the street to a private storage facility. WCCC follows NJ’s record retention schedule for the maintenance and disposal of files.

### New Student Experience

Prior to fall 2016, all students were required to compete the Foundations of Success course (FYE 101) prior to graduation. This 15-hour (1 credit) course covered a broad array of topics intended to help new students with their entry into college. The original course was based on Skip Downing’s book *On Course*. The success of this course was very uneven and a significant number of students each semester did not complete the course (see [FYE Statistics](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\FYE%20Grade%20Distribution.xlsx)). Ways to improve this course have been examined extensively. From 2004 through 2014, the former Student Success Committee grappled with ways to make this course more valuable to students. For example, the course has been taught completely online, via web-hybrid, on Fridays or Saturdays early in the semester, as part of a learning community; in regular classroom mode (one day a week or twice a week for half the semester) and via self-paced modules. Student input, including open statements from student evaluation forms and analysis of student grade distribution in this course indicated that while results varied by deliver mode, the overall course success rate was disappointing for a course that should be geared to close to a 100% success rate. Many students elected not to take the class in their first semester (or dropped the course at the beginning of the semester). As a result, the class often did not reach its intended target audience.

The Board of Trustees decision to move to a 60-credit model helped guide the ultimate decision to end this course. In addition, this course is not necessarily transferable to other colleges. When the faculty reviewed individual programs for the course reduction, nearly all determined that FYE was not the key to success in their program area and that major and general education courses were of higher priority.

* **New Student Orientation**

The College developed a more comprehensive orientation program to replace FYE 101. New Student Orientation (NSO) was made mandatory for all new students and FYE materials that in the past would have normally been distributed to students were put on My Warren under an orientation tab enabling all students have access to the information electronically. Certain skills, such as mastery of the online systems and the LMS system, included in the NSO session. Certain elements, such as Information Literacy, are now included in various general education courses (particularly English Composition).

Pre-semester student orientation sessions at WCCC is not new, however beginning in the fall 2016 semester, NSO became mandatory for all new, degree seeking students. Students who do not attend are placed on hold and may not register for subsequent semesters until they attend an NSO session. [NSO sessions](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\New%20Student%20Orientation.pdf) cover a broad array of topics, including FERPA rights, VAWA requirements, differences in degree types and key college policies and procedures. Students also work in computer labs to learn the basics of My Warren, including how to use the LMS system and how to access student success information. Parents are offered a separate session to orient them to the college experience.

Surveys are taken at the end of each orientation session. The results of the fall 2016 new student orientation surveys showed positive results with an average 89% rating when asked about their experience during NSO. The [2017 NSO survey](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\Fall%202017%20New%20Student%20Orientation%20Survey.pdf) was more comprehensive and allowed students to comment on the experience. While it is too early to determine whether the mandatory NSO is effective, early statistics are encouraging. Students who attended the NSO had an average fall 2016 GPA of 3.07. Those who did not attend had a fall 2016 GPA of 2.34.

Orientation materials are available to all students throughout the year in My Warren under the Student Orientation tab. Basic information, some of it from the previous FYE class, are included as information items for students.

### Student Success Programs

The Office of Student Services proactively intervene with students as necessary through their educational journey. There are several direct intervention initiatives undertaken by the College, which include:

1. Early Alert
2. Academic Recovery
3. Retention Alerts
4. Project Success

WCCC requests student grades from faculty at three points in the semester: 3rd Week (early alert grades), 8th week (mid-term grades) and 16th week (final grades). Early alert grading occurs after three weeks of classes. Faculty report whether the student has 1) never attended 2) has stopped attending or 3) is already exhibiting signs of struggle in the class. Instructors submit grades for students who fit into any one of these categories after the 3rd week of each semester. Any student who is assigned a grade of D, F, XF (stopped attending), or NF (never attended) is contacted by the Office of Student Services and asked to meet with an advisor to develop a plan to improve their performance in the class in question (**Early Alert**). Unfortunately, participation in the advising aspect of this program is minimal, averaging just around 4% each semester. However, a realized benefit of the early alert grading is to assist the Financial Aid Office with loan and grant disbursement. Early alert grades are checked to ensure that the students are attending before aid is disbursed. By reaching out to students and advising that financial aid payments may be in jeopardy, Financial Aid staff occasionally are able to get students “back on track.”

Mid-term grades are reviewed for financial aid purposes and for proactive student advising through Academic Recovery. Instructors are required to submit midterm grades for each of their students. The grades entered are P (passing), D (in danger of failing), F (failing), XF (stopped attending), and NF (never attended). Students with a less than passing grade are contacted to come in to meet with an advisor. In addition, a hold is placed on the student’s account (**Academic Recovery**). This hold is to prevent the student from registering for future semesters without meeting with an advisor to discuss their current situation in the courses they are not passing. They try to pinpoint the cause(s) of their failing grade and develop a plan in writing with the advisor as to what steps they will take in an attempt to improve their grade. The hold is removed from the student’s record after this plan has been developed. Students not participating in the program must wait until after final grades have been posted for the hold to be removed.

One challenge, however, is that student response to intervention programs is limited. Generally, only 30% students who are identified in the Academic Recovery process actually follow-up with an advisor. In many cases, the issue is a lack of attendance, not student performance. Students who have stopped attending normally do not want to come in to meet with an advisor to discuss attendance issues. However, the notification can be helpful to encourage students to withdraw from classes rather in lieu of receiving a failing grade and there are occasions where students return to classes.

As shown in the [Academic Recovery statistics](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\Academic%20Recovery%20Data.xlsx), students that do participate in the intervention program have consistently had a higher chance of passing than those who do not. Academic Recovery has been modified several times over the past decade, using group sessions and even online student planning. Currently, Academic Recovery is done individually with the Student Services advisors and students complete an [Academic Recovery Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\Academic%20Recovery%20Plan.xls).

WCCC purchased the Retention module as part of its Jenzabar system. This module includes **Retention Alerts** that allow faculty to notify various offices (primarily Student Services) about a specific student issue. Each fall and spring, faculty are shown how to use the Retention Alert System during the kick-off sessions. Most early alerts are issued for academic or attendance issues (example: a student not completing assignments or who is absent frequently from class), but faculty can also ask the College to check on a student’s wellness or a financial issue. The Retention Alert module was activated for the spring 2016 semester. Each retention alert is followed up with an e-mail and a phone call from an advisor. Results thus far have been mixed. Most early alerts are submitted from only a handful of faculty and nearly all relate to attendance issues. Most of these students have already been identified through prior XF or NF grade reporting. In addition, many faculty elect to meet with advisors to discuss student issues rather than use electronic communications. Nonetheless, it is a system that the College will continue to encourage use of as an additional means for proactive student intervention.

**Project Success** is a program designed for students whose cumulative GPA is less than 2.0. Students are contacted to meet with an advisor to discuss a plan to improve the GPA. Students who participated in the program had a higher rate of improving their GPA over those who did not participate. Each year, there are approximately 150 students identified through Project Success as not meeting progress standards. These students are directed to meet with an advisor and cannot register online for the next semester. Advising holds are removed once a student is back on track academically. Students are encouraged to develop an [Academic Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\My%20Academic%20Plan.docx) to help document their path to success. These plans are also used for getting student back on track as part of the SAP standards.

**Retention Committee/Assessment of Student Success Efforts**

From 2004 through 2015, the College convened a monthly ad-hoc Retention Committee that discussed assessment statistics from various student success programs and recommended program enhancements. The Committee was well attended by faculty, adjuncts and staff and developed several new initiatives and recommended changes in the delivery of various services. Some of the changes or pilot projects recommended during this period were as follows:

* Early Alert--An early alert form was developed so that the faculty could submit information for individual students with difficulties. This was used from 2005 through 2009 with very limited success. Early Alert forms primarily became a vehicle for identifying students who had never attended or who had stopped attending classes. Because the initial Early Alert program was handled in paper format, it was often cumbersome for faculty and administrators to use. The College substituted this with online Early Alert grade reporting in 2009.

Online Early Alert grade reporting was initially set up just after the 10th day. However, the Retention Committee determined that timeline was too early as it was difficult to assess in that period whether a student had abandoned a class (more attrition tends to occur in weeks 3 or 4, once major assignments are due). For that reason, the early alert reporting period was moved to a period after three weeks in the semester. This has proven more successful in identifying students with attendance issues and those that are struggling early in the courses.

An initial challenge with early alert grade reporting was the universal adoption of this reporting structure. The Retention Committee was very helpful in stressing the importance of grade reporting to instructional colleagues. It took approximately two years for universal participation in the system. Another challenge was the interpretation regarding attendance. Faculty had varying interpretations of what constituted attendance, especially in online classes. Student Services has clarified in various communications specific parameters for determining attendance/non-attendance in class, which has helped over the past several years.

Early alert grading remains in-place, although it is primarily a tool to monitor attendance for financial aid loan and state grant disbursement. As noted previously, the College has added the online Retention Alert function that instructors can notify advisors about retention issues. However, there have been relatively few adopters of this system at this point.

* Academic Recovery—a number of changes have been piloted for the Academic Recovery program. Academic Recovery is based upon the input of grades at the mid-term period. Again, a challenge initially was the determination of a student’s enrollment status (is the student gone for a week, or permanently missing from a course). Some faculty have been concerned about the impact of identifying students who had an uneven attendance record. Student Services has provided additional information clarifying the information, which has assisted in identifying the students who potentially have stopped attending classes.

A major challenge with initiatives based on early alert and mid-term grades is that many students do not want to meet with an advisor to discuss less than stellar mid-term grades. For this reason, the Retention Committee recommended various modalities for counseling students. At different times over the past decade, Student Services advisors have tried group advising sessions (this was needed in the years when enrollment was high), online advising and even phone advising. However, statistics showed very little difference in student participation despite the different modalities suggested by the Retention Committee.

Academic Recovery remains in place and has returned to one-on-one advising. Even if students do not show up for advising, the mid-term grade reporting assists in the Financial Aid process to determine attendance for Pell grant distribution. However, for those who do participate, the program does appear to be successful.

* FYE-The Retention Committee spent several years exploring new content and delivery modalities for the First Year Experience (FYE) course. FYE, while enthusiastically delivered by instructors, did not result in increased student success even with the changes recommended by the Committee. The College, therefore, eliminated this course in fall 2016 in favor of mandatory orientation and more emphasis on basic college skills (especially information literacy) in general education courses.

With the retirement of the Student Services advisor who coordinated the Retention Committee and the hiring of a Pathways Coordinator, the College shifted focus from retention as a Student Services responsibility to a College-wide responsibility. The redesign of the curriculum and the remediation efforts became a key component of the student retention process. These redesigns and the preliminary results of these efforts are discussed in more detail under Standards III and V.

**EOF Program**

WCCC identifies and provides additional academic and financial support to educationally underprepared students through the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program. A state-funded grant program, EOF is designed to assist first-generation college students who come from educationally and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. EOF began in NJ in the late 1960s as a response to the limited access to higher education by poor, minority students in urban centers. Given Warren County’s demographics and the size of the college, WCCC was not initially approached for the program when the College began offering degree programs in 1992. However, given the poverty level in Phillipsburg and its former designation as a “B” school district (eligible for supplemental K-12 funding), the College successfully made the case that there was a need for the EOF program at WCCC.

Students’ financial eligibility for EOF is first determined through the FAFSA. Educational eligibility is further assessed by placement scores and/or high school GPA. The EOF Program begins with the Summer Bridge Program designed to introduce first time students to the academic and social demands of college. It is considered an introductory academic program designed to give students an early start prior to their first semester of college. During this time, students receive the appropriate support required to improve their reading, writing, and mathematics skills, along with learning the habits and skills necessary to be successful in college. Although the summer cohorts are small, all students place into college-level English after the Summer Bridge Program and many are able to advance into college-level mathematics.

EOF students receive additional support services throughout the academic year, including mandatory tutoring, mentoring, designated study space on campus and close monitoring of their progress by the EOF Coordinator[. Graduation rates of EOF students](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\EOF%20Graduation%20Statistics.xlsx) has improved over the last few years, although still a bit behind that of the College at the 2-year mark, in part because of the remediation needs of students. However, the 3- and 4-year graduation rates of EOF students have seen an improvement over the last two years.

The EOF program has remained relatively steady at WCCC, with approximately 45 participants annually over the past decade. Recruiting students for the program remains a challenge. In order to initially be eligible for the program, students must meet financial eligibility requirements, be underprepared for college and be a first-generation student. New students must also participate in the 5-week summer program. This last requirement is particularly problematic for students, as childcare, limited transportation and work schedules often provide barriers for participation over the summer. Students must also start the fall semester on a full-time basis, which also precludes broader participation by economically and educationally disadvantaged students.

A major challenge over the past several years has been the recruitment of students. While EOF provides financial incentives for participation, it is difficult to get students to participate in the entry summer program due to time commitments. Further, EOF students are also TAG and Pell Grant recipients so all of their college costs are already covered and many already receive a financial aid refund. The participation requirements of the program, particularly a commitment to the summer program, may outweigh the benefit of an extra $500 in financial aid per semester. A priority for WCCC will be to see how the College can strengthen participation and results in the EOF program.

### ADA Services

The College provides accommodations to students with special needs in accordance with [Board Policy 308](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\308.docx). Students who request accommodations must provide supporting documentation. The ADA Coordinator then approves accommodations. Students are given the accommodations paperwork to obtain services from their instructors at the beginning of each semester. Instructors must provide written acknowledgment they have received the instructions and agree to follow them. Since the student-instructor sign-off process was put in place in fall 2012, there have not been any written complaints from either students or instructors regarding the process. The College has brought in speakers for In-Service training that help to clarify ADA requirements. In turn, students understand that they must inform their instructor of their needs so that they can work out mutually agreeable arrangements.

The chart below shows the number of students who receive accommodations each semester. Note that the totals reflect duplicated students as a student must request accommodations for each semester and in each course. Accommodations may range from special technology (such as audio book readers and audio books), use of recording equipment in the classroom, notes from the instructor or a classmate and/or extra time to take quizzes or tests to complete assignments.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart IV-11 Number of ADA Accommodations from 2011-12 to 2016-17** | | | | |
| **Year** | **Fall** | **Spring** | **Summer** | **Total** |
| 2011-12 | 97 | 69 | 45 | 211 |
| 2012-13 | 98 | 81 | 24 | 203 |
| 2013-14 | 81 | 67 | 22 | 170 |
| 2014-15 | 82 | 60 | 19 | 161 |
| 2015-16 | 63 | 61 | 13 | 137 |
| 2016-17 | 65 | 40 | 13 | 128 |

The reduction in the number of students receiving accommodations reflects changes in the College’s enrollment since 2011-12, when the College had its highest enrollment year. The reduction in summer accommodations reflects fewer WCCC students attending summer classes, which in part can be attributed to the elimination of the Summer Pell grant program. We anticipate a slight increase in summer enrollment in summer 2018 due to the reinstatement of summer Pell grants.

### Online Student Success Tools

In fall 2015, the College transitioned from a legacy 1995 Jenzabar CMDS system to Jenzabar EX ERM system. In addition to the standard modules, the College also purchased and implemented the Retention, a Mobile App and the eLearning modules. The web portal system is named My Warren. In addition to online registration and eLearning, this system provides various tools for students, including:

* Major Exploration (a student can explore how changing a major will affect their course requirements)
* Degree Audit (a student can view what requirements have been met, what is in progress and what is needed to be completed)
* Online Registration degree program eligibility (a student is advised whether a designated course will fit into their degree requirements and is eligible for financial assistance)
* GPA Calculator (allows a student to see a GPA calculation based on an estimate of grades earned in current and subsequent semesters)
* Unofficial Transcript (allows a student to print out an unofficial transcript)
* Academic Plan template (a feature that allows students to plan future semesters to determine the semester of graduation).

The degree audit function is particularly useful for students and for the Financial Aid Office. Advising information is transferred from Jenzabar to Powerfaids and financial aid is awarded based on the number of eligible degree credits. Students who undertake online registration are also advised if a course counts towards a degree requirement. These tools have been very helpful in ensuring that students do not take excess credits beyond their degree requirements.

### Student Appeals Process

Students have the ability to appeal both academic and financial decisions. The Special Considerations process allows students to appeal grades for medical or financial reasons. Students submit a [Special Considerations Form](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\Special-Consideration-Request.pdf) with appropriate documentation to a committee consisting of staff representatives from various college offices. The Committee meets at least bi-monthly to consider student appeals. Students are then notified of the Committee’s decision, which may include approval of a medical withdrawal, a full or partial tuition credit or refund, a waiver of prior charges, or a denial of the appeal. Students who disagree with the Committee decision may appeal to the President. The President’s decision is final. However, over the past decade, only a handful of appeals have reach the President’s office.

Students may also appeal a grade if they disagree with what their instructor assigned. This appeal is reviewed by the Office of Academic Affairs and the student is notified in writing of the results. Students who disagree with the recommendation of the Vice President of Academic Affairs may appeal to the President. In most cases, the Academic Vice President does not overturn the decision of the instructor. Over the past decade, zero grade appeals have risen to the level of the President.

Additionally, a student may apply for Academic Forgiveness. Academic Forgiveness is an appeal to exclude a particular course in the student’s overall GPA (the grade still appears on the transcript). It is typically done in a case where a student is unable to repeat a course to receive a higher grade because a) the course is no longer offered by the college or b) the course is no longer part of a student’s major. Students who are approved for Academic Forgiveness must wait at least two years for consideration and must otherwise be in good academic standing. Students generally include an explanation of why they were unsuccessful in the course. Typically, the College receives around eight Academic Forgiveness requests per year. Academic Forgiveness does not have an impact on the quantitative requirements under the Federal Student Academic Progress (SAP) standards.

Students also have the right to appeal grades as well as to request a 30-day extension in a course (which must be approved by the instructor). See the various [Academic Appeals forms](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\Academic%20Appeals%20forms.pdf)  that document student requests and college decisions on appeals or grade changes.

### Student Life

WCCC was founded as a “College without Walls.” When the College’s main campus was built in 1995, it was designed as a strictly academic facility. In 2000, when the College attempted to build a Student Center, it was strongly rebuffed by the Freeholders and the Warren County citizens. A lawsuit ensued that went to the NJ Supreme Court. The Court sided with the citizens and Freeholders. Based on this outcome, the College has focused physical development solely on the academic space needs. Where possible, it has tried to repurpose certain areas for student use.

WCCC’s small enrollment and lack of physical amenities limits the ability of the College to offer collegiate athletics. As a small college with limited space for student events, student activities also do not play a huge role in the day-to-day happenings on campus. At the beginning of each semester, there is a weeklong club fair, where students and/or faculty interested in a club provide the opportunity for students to register for clubs. All clubs must have a faculty or administrative sponsor and must adhere to [Policy 310](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\310.docx) (Student Clubs and Organizations).

Each semester, there are several active clubs on campus (see [WCCC club page](http://www.warren.edu/clubs/)), many of which are involved in philanthropic activities, such as toy, food, blood and clothing drives, and bake sales and other fundraisers for local charitable organizations. The most active and largest organization on campus is Phi Theta Kappa (PTK), an international honor society for two-year colleges. The College’s chapter has recently been named a 5-Star Chapter due to increased PTK activities on campus. Each year, PTK coordinates the C4 (Community College Completion Corps) Event, which focuses and encourages the completion of a student’s degree program. Students are encouraged to sign a pledge that they will complete their degree. In addition, the various services available to students to assist them with completion are highlighted throughout the week of the C4 Event. Additionally, the Student Nurses Organization (SNO) publicizes information about current health issues, including the need for bone marrow, organ and blood donations and as well as cancer and heart disease awareness. The Red Cross Club and Mu Alpha Theta have undertaken various drives to benefit the community. In 2016, the Golden Eagle Safety Nest was begun to provide food gift cards to students who suffer from food insecurity. This club continues to expand its outreach in the community to support WCCC students in need.

In addition to student organizations, the faculty organize an annual Visiting Authors Series, which brings a diverse group of spoken word artists to the campus during the academic year. There are usually five Visiting Authors events hosted by WCCC each year. Most artists not only host a reading, but also participate in a Master Class at the College. The event has been co-sponsored by the Warren County Cultural and Heritage Commission, which provide stipends for authors annually.

Beginning in 2013, the College began hosting the Common Experience event. The College has held seven Common Experience events, including one major reading that has been held in each of the past four years. The Common Experience allows a common thread to be dispersed throughout the College, regardless of discipline. Throughout the last few years, topics covered in the selected Common Experience readings have included creativity, poverty, community/police relations and the effects of active-duty combat. Since 2013, Common Experience authors have included Kevin Powers, Alice Goffman, Barbara Ehrenreich and Elizabeth Gilbert. Regardless of the genre, a number of instructors throughout campus have incorporated the Common Experience books into their class. Due to the anticipated construction and Middle States commitments, the College put the Common Experience on hiatus for 2017-18.

### Student Evaluation of WCCC Services

In addition to student course evaluations, WCCC has periodically participated in national surveys to gauge student satisfaction and student engagement. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was administered in 2005, 2012 and 2016. The [2016 CCSSE](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\CCSSE%202016%20Key%20Findings.pdf) indicated that WCCC students rated the College lower in the category of Active and Collaborative Learning, particularly in working with colleagues outside the classroom and participating in community based projects. In response to this, the College has expanded its efforts on student internships as part of the Pathways Initiative. The College scored well in CCSSE in communication with faculty and student effort. The survey noted that students had a better knowledge about instructors, perhaps due to the smaller size of the College.

The College also participated in the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) in fall 2010 and spring 2015. The [2015 SSI](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\Noel%20Levitz%202015%20Findings.pdf) showed that students had an increase in satisfaction from the 2010 survey. The survey indicated the welcoming environment as a positive, along with faculty availability outside of the classroom. Some challenges identified concerned the advising process, timely faculty feedback and the availability of multiple course sections. The implementation of the new Jenzabar system after this survey has provided for online advising information for students; online grade reporting (which is increasingly used by on-campus faculty) was intended to address the student feedback issues. Course options continue to be problematic; however, the College has developed the new block scheduling system to reduce the overlap between course sections to increase student course options.

In addition to standardized surveys, various offices from time use surveys for feedback. All graduates are given the [Graduation Mini-Survey](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\Graduation%20Mini-Survey%202013-17.pdf) that allows them to provide final feedback as students and vote for the annual alumni trustee. For the most part, these students have a very positive view of the College. This survey also has provided WCCC with a snapshot view of the next step for its graduates (transfer or career). During spring 2017, the College followed up with the 2016 graduates to find out their current employment or college status. 37% of graduates responded and a majority of them indicated in the [alumni survey](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\Alumni%20Survey%20Class%20of%202016.pdf) that they were currently pursuing baccalaureate degrees.

WCCC hosts periodic “lunch and learn” focus groups to gauge student satisfaction; however, these tend to have limited attendance. Two focus groups were conducted in the spring 2017 semester... Eighteen students participated between the two groups. The students were very open about their experience as students and were forthcoming in both their criticisms and compliments. Almost all of the students agreed that their biggest complaint had to do with the speed of the on-campus computers, WiFi access throughout the facility as well as the milled parking lot lines fading. They all also agreed that small class sizes and being known by name, rather than a number, are real benefits. There were additional areas covered, including advising, financial aid, course offerings and limited student activities.

## Summary

WCCC is an open-admission college with established admission, transfer, registration and financial aid policies that guide operations. Student and public information are protected by a series of internal controls.

The College measures the effectiveness of programs and services for students and adjusts offerings to better serve the needs of students. Over the past two years, the College has expanded its offering of online retention tools for students. A challenge is increasing both student and faculty use of these tools. While WCCC offers some “intrusive advising” initiatives, the majority of students do not participate in these initiatives despite efforts to redesign the delivery of these services.

Because of the size of the college and the lack of physical amenities, WCCC is not able to offer a broad-array of co-curricular activities. However, there are a variety of clubs and cultural events for students. WCCC student organizations tend to be philanthropic in nature, raising funds for external groups that serve needy residents.

A small institution does provide benefit for students. WCCC has been able to quickly alter programs and services when it is clear that activities are not as effective as they should be. This theme also carries to the evaluation of academic services, which is discussed in detail under Standard V.

**Institutional Opportunities**

* WCCC should encourage the broader use of technology by faculty for the reporting of student attendance and progress more regularly to determine those who appear “at risk.”
* WCCC should consider new approaches to student success initiatives, including ways to encourage positive Student Services-student interactions.
* Based on these initiatives, the College should focus on recruiting, retaining and graduating additional EOF students.

# Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

*Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.*

## Requirements of Affiliation

This chapter addresses the following Requirement of Affiliation:

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

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

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

## Overview

Educational assessment has been a key priority for the Board of Trustees. Since 2006, the College has had a comprehensive [Institutional Effectiveness Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Institutional%20Effectiveness%20Plan.docx). This document was most recently updated in 2017. During 2015, the Board of Trustees approved Strategic Plan 2020, which focused on the redesign of remedial education and the enhancement of assessment activities. Also in that year, the College hired a consultant to assess the College’s program review and outcomes assessment process. The cumulative result of these initiatives has been significant changes in the College’s curriculum and assessment process, including:

* Creation of a new Assessment Committee
* Realignment of student learning goals for academic programs
* Redesign /standardization of course syllabi to focus on student learning outcomes and revised general education core competency
* Redesign of the OA/PR process
* Redesign of remedial mathematics curriculum
* “Fast-tracking” of required English sequence
* Redesign of the General Education requirements
* Realignment of most programs to reduce requirements to 60 credits

These changes are discussed in this chapter.

## Discussion and Analysis

### Academic Assessment Prior to 2015-16

In 2004, the College established a dual academic assessment process, the Outcomes Assessment/Program Review process (OA/PR process). The OA/PR process called for a two-step review of academic programs by each department. In year one, the department reviewed various courses in the program as part of the Outcomes Assessment (OA) process. Based on data gathered in the OA process, the department then undertook the Program Review (PR) phase of assessment. The OA/PR process was on a five-year cycle and included a report template for the OA and the PR reports. The process was guided by the Chair of the OA/PR committee, who held monthly meetings with each department during the year that they were going through the OA or the PR processes. All Outcomes Assessment and Program Reviews were shared with the Academic Vice President and OA/PR Group in My Warren.

Under the prior process, every OA/PR report used a standard template that focused on the collection and analysis of program data and the submittal of a comprehensive Outcomes Assessment (course analysis) Report in year one and a similarly comprehensive Program Review Report in year two. One challenge to this process was that the small size of certain programs, particularly A.A.S. and Certificate programs, made it difficult to draw course and program conclusions. Some programs have fewer than 10 students in the major (see current list of [Program Majors](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Program%20Majors%20Fall%202011%20to%20Fall%202016.xlsx)). Further, many of the smaller programs were guided by a single full-time teaching instructor, who completed both the OA/PR assessment reports. The workload for this two-year process often was difficult for a single- instructor program to manage on a recurring basis. A third challenge with the process was the redundancy of certain aspects of both reports and the need to collect data (such as the biographies of all instructors), which added additional workload to the process.

**Redesign of the Assessment Process**

In May 2015, the College hired a consultant to review the OA/PR process. The [Consultant’s Report on Assessment](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Consultant's%20Report%20on%20Assessment.docx) included a number of recommendations, most notably the establishment of a new Assessment Committee and a simplification of the OA/PR process. The College re-aligned its assessment process, based, in part, on these recommendations. In fall 2015, the College established an Assessment Committee, comprising faculty, teaching administrators and administrators. Its objectives include:

* Review current assessment procedures and methods.
* Make recommendations to ensure ongoing, meaningful assessment aimed at continuous improvement of student learning.
* Solicit input from faculty for initiatives to improve assessment.
* Assess the Program Review report template.
* Meet with faculty concerning their program reviews and recommend strategies for improvement.
* Support additional professional development training on assessment.[[17]](#footnote-17)

The committee is active, meets monthly, and maintains materials and minutes in the Assessment Committee group in My Warren. In two short years, the committee has recommended a number of changes in the assessment process, which, in turn, have been approved and implemented, including:

1. Amending the Program Review process from a five-year process to a three-year process. (See the [Revised Program Review Cycle](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Program%20Review%20Cycle%202017-2026.docx)).
2. Eliminating the OA process to be replaced with the [Instructor Outcomes Assessment Report](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Instructor%20Outcomes%20Assessment%20Form.docx). This report focuses on course outcomes activities implemented by full-time teaching staff. This allowed the compilation of data on assessment tools used in the classroom.
3. A simplified version of this report was extended to adjuncts for voluntary in 2016-2017.
4. Implementing of a pre- and post-test process to assess student learning in all sections. To the extent possible, a standardized test will be used for multiple section of the same course. Results of these reports will be submitted to full-time faculty for review and analysis. The pre- and post-test activities would be included in the Annual Faculty Report
5. Revising the [Program Review Template](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Revised%20Program%20Review%20Report.docx) in the 2016 cycle to simplify the process and focus on meaningful data collection.
6. Shifting the focus of the OA/PR Committee from group meetings to individual one-on-one meetings with faculty. During 2016, the chair met with faculty members to review the Annual Faculty Report to review best practices and to make suggestions to enhance the process.
7. Further standardizing of all master syllabi into a new template that lists tools used to measure student learning outcomes. Core competencies were updated to reflect state general education requirements. Master syllabi are also available on the College’s website using the following link: <http://www.warren.edu/course-syllabi/>.
8. Reviewing, revising, and reaffirming degree program goals and course objectives.
9. Reviewing program review recommendations at a monthly faculty meeting to obtain collegial input on report recommendations.

### Outcomes Assessment

The Outcomes Assessment (OA) activities are intended to focus on how to improve student learning outcomes in individual courses. Prior to 2016, OA activities focused on a structured process to examine specific courses in individual programs. However, based on a review of this system by the Assessment Committee, it was determined that the OA process included redundancies with the PR process and was not necessarily helpful to determining the effectiveness of courses and programs.

During 2015-16, the Assessment Committee recommended a revision of the OA process. Rather than focusing on a structured process, the Committee instead suggested that the process be simplified to focus on improving course delivery. All instructors are asked to use tools, including pre- and post-tests, to help evaluate how they are meeting the student learning outcomes in their courses. Faculty would focus instead on exploring how they were achieving course outcomes and where course delivery could be improved. The year-end [Instructor Outcomes Assessment Form](file:///\\wcccsvr06\staffdocs\pratt\Middle%20States\2018%20Self-Study\Appendices\Chap%203\Instructor%20Outcomes%20Assessment%20Form.docx), which has been modified twice over the past two years, now focuses on faculty assessment activities and strategies to address student learning goals. The Assessment Committee will be looking at some of the assessment tools that faculty believe are the most helpful and gauging whether the pre- and post-testing is working across the various program areas.

The current process calls for all faculty to undertake pre- and post-testing within individual course sections. The intent of this process is two-fold. First, it allows for some standardization of outcomes within multiple sections of the same course. Second, it allows faculty to determine whether there were areas where additional focus is needed in the course. For example, questions where students show no improvement from pre- to post-test may indicate a concept that needs additional attention in the course.

Pre- and post-testing has been required for courses since spring 2016. The results have been mixed. The standardization has not always been achieved in all multiple course sections, although certain disciplines, including courses such as mathematics and psychology, have used common assessment instruments. A benefit of this process to individual teaching instructors has been to focus on the effectiveness of questions and whether they focus on specific learning goals. Many instructors have used the process to analyze key course content and learning outcomes.

Pre- and post-testing is one of the areas that faculty focus on in the Instructor Outcomes Assessment Report. This report is required of full-time faculty and teaching instructors and optional for adjunct faculty. However, nearly all instructors have participated over the past two years in pre- and post-testing process. During fall 2017, the effectiveness of pre- and post-testing was discussed at both the monthly Academics (full-time instructor) and Assessment Committee meetings. There are mixed reactions from the full-time instructors to this tool as shown in the attached [pre and post-test responses](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\PrePost%20Survey%20Summary%20Responses.xlsx) from full-time instructors. The pre- and post-tests appear to work better in the sciences, social science and mathematics courses and appear less successful with humanities classes. During the spring 2018 semester, instructors are being given the option to complete a Course Goal Assessment Rubric (see [sample](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Example%20of%20New%20Assessment%20Rubric.docx)) for one course section this spring. The Assessment Committee will analyze the effectiveness of this tool next fall.

### Program Review

Until 2016, Program Review was done on a five-year basis. Programs are defined as both Career Programs and general education majors. General education courses are reviewed as part of the individual program reviews and specialized reviews undertaken by the College.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Based on changes approved in 2015-16, Program Review is now completed on a three-year basis using the new Program Review template. The first programs to go through the new assessment process were:

* Business
* Communication
* Creative Writing
* Elementary/Secondary Education
* Social Science
* Technical Studies

Please see sample Program Review reports completed over the past several years for [Criminal Justice](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Program%20Review%20Criminal%20Justice.pdf) (2014), [Computer Science](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Program%20Review%20Computer%20Sciences.docx) (2015), [Graphic and Web Design](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Program%20Review%20Graphic%20and%20Web%20Design.docx) (2016), as well as two programs completed using the new template: [Social Sciences](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Program%20Review%20Social%20Sciences.docx) (2017) and [Business](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Program%20Review%20Business.pdf) (2017).

Over the last five-years, the Program Review Process has resulted in changes in several academic programs. For example, the process resulted in the development of capstone courses, particularly in Criminal Justice and Fine Arts. Program Review has not only examined program outcomes statistics, but also the review of curricular needs in a particular program.

A detailed examination of program enrollment, student employability, and program graduation rates has resulted in change for certain programs. For example, the program review for Graphic and Web Design pointed to concerns for the employability of graduates and transferability of the A.A.S. program. As a result, the program currently is undergoing a redesign to become an A.A. transfer program. The recently completed A.A. in Business has resulted in a recommendation to move this program to an A.S. in Business to improve transferability. The process for amending this program will begin in spring 2018.

Another example is in Early Childhood Education. Although the program review indicated that students in the program were extremely successful in outcomes (including national testing results), the program was deemed unsustainable because of the low enrollment.[[19]](#footnote-19) This program was put on hiatus in fall 2016. The instructional faculty in this program continue to be involved in the phase-out of the program and are active in the Secondary Education program.

Program review also has dovetailed with new Board policies and priorities as detailed in the Strategic Plan. These priorities resulted in a more comprehensive review of both program curriculum, general education, and remedial education requirements. Warren County Community College has taken the lead among NJ institutions of dramatically re-assessing curriculum needs and comprehensively re-assessing nearly every academic program.

### General Education

Similar to many community colleges, WCCC has incorporated general education course reviews into the major program reviews. However, separate program reviews have been done for remedial English, remedial mathematics and mathematics, even though these are not degree programs.

General Education course eligibility is determined at the sector level. All courses must be consistent with the [Approved NJ General Education Goals](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\NJCC%20General%20Education%20Requirements.docx) that were set forth by the NJ President’s Council and then codified by the NJ County College presidents in 2011. All general education courses are submitted to the statewide NJ Community College General Education Committee (consisting of Chief Academic Officers from several NJ colleges) for review and then submitted to the NJ County College presidents for approval. Over the past three years, the General Education Committee has systemically reviewed nearly all general education courses, focusing on the following questions:

1. Are the courses of sufficient breadth and scope to qualify as general education?
2. Are there appropriate learning goals for these courses that reflect the guiding general education principles?

WCCC has undertaken a number of initiatives related to general education over the past decade. For example, from 2007 to 2012, the College administered the ETS Proficiency Profile on three separate occasions. However, the results from this assessment were not very useful and there were no consistent patterns or outcomes that the College could discern from this assessment tool. Part of the challenge in administering this assessment is that there was no way to make this assessment meaningful to students. Assessment scores were based on student self-reported credits earned which also was considered problematic.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Over the past five years, the College has undertaken a number of individual assessments of general education courses. These include:

1. Examining [student pre- and post-course perceived proficiencies](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\General%20Education%20Survey%20Spring%202015.pdf) in five general education measures (spring 2015). These survey results, while somewhat flawed, pointed for the need for an additional examination of the general education curriculum in general and the math sequence.
2. Undertaking a 2015-16 [Information Literacy Assessment](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Infomation%20Literacy%20Survey.pdf), which led to a redesign of information literacy information now available on the [library website](http://warren.libguides.com/content.php?pid=701925&sid=5823822) and in My Warren for students.
3. Realigning the general education curriculum (see next section) for all major courses.
4. Redesigning the remedial mathematics curriculum in 2015-16 (with implementation beginning in 2016-17). See discussion beginning on page 75.
5. Participation in the NJ Center for Student Success’ [Core Student Learning Outcomes](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\NJCCC%20Core%20Student%20Learning%20Outcomes.docx) in 2016. This project was undertaken at the same time that WCCC was revising the standardized course syllabi and helped to direct the WCCC re-design.

Because there are a few courses that are not reviewed in the program review process, an ad hoc General Education committee has been tasked to review these courses. They have also been asked to review prior activities undertaken and to make recommendations for future general education modifications. (See the [charge](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\2017-18%20General%20Education%20Program%20Review%20Charge.docx) to the 2017-18 General Education committee.)

### Curricular Re-Design/Re-design of General Education Requirements

In 2015, Board of Trustee [Policy 402.1](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\402.1.docx) reduced the credit total for most associate degree programs to 60 credits.[[21]](#footnote-21) This resulted in a re-examination of the credit needs in most programs. The [Program Realignment Chart](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Program%20Realignment%20Chart.pdf) indicates how programs were redesigned to allow students to complete many degree programs in 60 credits.

Program changes were then reviewed and approved by the President and included in the academic catalog. Students were informed of the degree program changes and were advised of new program requirements. Students were offered the option of completing prior or current degree requirements, whichever were most beneficial.

Many of the degree program changes focused on revising the general education requirements in programs, including STEM program specific mathematics, communications, and humanities requirements. Unlike many colleges, WCCC had previously required students to complete at least two science courses, one math, and one technology course for their general education needs (totaling a minimum of 14 credits). In a review of both community college and senior public institution general education requirements, it was determined that the WCCC standards were more rigorous than nearly every institution and required more general education credits in science and mathematics. Under the College’s new general education requirements, students may take 12 credits in STEM-related courses but are no longer required to take two math and two science courses in the general education block. In addition, the College redesigned its Introduction to Computer Software Course (CSC 112) from three credits to a two credit Introduction to Technology Course (CSC 102) course by eliminating the Microsoft Access component (this software was deemed no longer relevant to most program and career needs). This gave students the option to satisfy the general education requirement with two math courses, one science course, and one technology course.

Another general education change has been the elimination of the one-credit Foundations of Success (FYE 101) course. This course has been taught in a number of different modalities and undergone a number of format and content changes over the past decade. It has been the most studied and most revamped course in the College’s curriculum. However, despite an extensive re-tooling of this course, the results were below what was anticipated. For a course that should have had nearly 100% pass rates with most students earning an A, the redesign continued to see lower pass rates. By fall 2015, only 71% of the students received a C or better and only 26% earned an A in the course (see [FYE pass rates](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%204%20Links\FYE%20Grade%20Distribution.xlsx)) and an increasing number of students dropped the course in their first semester. A number ended up re-taking the course toward the end of their degree program because it was required (defeating the purpose of the course as an introduction to college). For these reasons, in fall 2016, the course was eliminated. Instead, the College instituted mandatory student orientation for all new students. The mandatory orientation is discussed in Standard IV.

Other changes involved more flexibility in communications offerings (allowing Speech or Interpersonal Communication), offering more flexibility in college mathematics requirements (Algebra had been the preferred course in a number of programs), and expanding options for humanities electives.

Faculty took the lead in redesigning individual programs, bringing individual program proposals to the C & I Committee for consideration.[[22]](#footnote-22) One of the Committee’s roles is to ensure coherence across and among programs so that a student could move from one program to another without having to take additional general education offerings. Most of the program changes were implemented in June 2016, with current students given the option of using current or revised program requirements. Transcripts for students who had completed 60 credits were reviewed to determine if they now met new program requirements. In addition, the advising module was revised so students were able to check My Warren to determine remaining course needs.

### Review of Course Goals, Core Competencies and Degree Program Goals

During 2015-16, the goals and core competencies for each course were reviewed by faculty as part of the redesign of the master syllabus for each course. Course goals were streamlined and standardized across the curriculum. In addition, the general education “core competencies” were updated for each course. The core competencies align with the NJ General Education goals. Master syllabi are posted on the College’s website under <http://www.warren.edu/course-syllabi/>.

As part of the syllabi review, all course syllabi were further standardized to include a common format, more generalized student learning goals and the means of assessment for these goals. Prior to this re-design, learning goals varied widely in number and breadth by course and program. This redesign of syllabi/student learning goals was another recommendation made by the consultant reviewing the College’s program review process that has been achieved by the College.

While individual faculty members have the academic freedom to establish the itinerary (topics from class or week to week) and assessment instruments, the College must ensure that all courses cover the basic topical requirements of the course and use the common text for the course. Therefore, in addition to the master course syllabus, all faculty must post their individual semester syllabi on the Academics group page in My Warren. This allows for a review of individual syllabi to ensure that they are comparable. The posting of syllabi also provides documentation for the Academic Affairs should a student submit a grade appeal.

Lastly, each academic program has a set of degree program goals (see [Course-Program Goal Matrixes](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%203%20Links\Course-Program%20Goal%20Matrixes.docx)). Degree program goals were last reviewed and updated by faculty in fall 2016.

### Review of Remedial Education

Over the past four years, the College community has spent significant time analyzing and revising its remedial education sequence. This process began with a [Remedial Education Consultant’s Report](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\External%20Review%20of%20Developmental%20Education.docx) completed in January 2013, just before the submission of the PRR. That report included 12 recommendations, many which have been implemented by the College as noted in the [Remedial Education Consultant Report Status.](file:///\\wcccsvr06\staffdocs\pratt\Middle%20States\2018%20Self-Study\Appendices\Chap%203\Revised%20Program%20Review%20Report.docx).

The 2013 Consultant’s review was based on cohort data from the 2008 entering class. The data from the 2010 class, as shown in chart V-1, indicated a similar pattern, which suggested remedial reform was in order.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart V-1 2010 FT Entering Student Cohort** | | | | | |
|  | **ENG 042** | **ENG 042** | **MAT 051** | **MAT 051** | **MAT052** |
|  | **Critical** | **Basic** | **Basic** | **Intro to** | **Intermediate** |
|  | **Reading** | **Writing** | **Arithmetic** | **Algebra** | **Algebra** |
| **% of new students in this cohort** | **29%** | **23%** | **28%** | **18%** | **11%** |
| Enroll 1 year later | 49% | 56% | 55% | 62% | 65% |
| Graduate in 2 years | 0% | 2% | 0% | 7% | 12% |
| Graduate in 3 years | 4% | 5% | 3% | 12% | 21% |
| Graduate in 4 years | 7% | 9% | 7% | 15% | 22% |

Prior to fall 2016, WCCC offered three levels of mathematics remediation and two remedial English classes. However, as shown above, students placing in the lower levels of remedial courses had very low graduation rates (only students placing into Intermediate Algebra had graduation rates somewhat comparable to the overall WCCC graduation rate at that time). Based on these statistics, the Board of Trustees determined that the College needed to find alternative methodologies to address remediation and improve student retention and graduation.

In 2014-15, the State of NJ made grant funds available for community college remediation efforts through a NJ College Readiness grant. WCCC, through its Division of Continuing Education, used these funds to develop a pilot alternative to remediation for 20 high school juniors who were judged to have placed into college remediation via the ACCUPLACER test. Instead of taking the remediation course, the students took an after school Kaplan SAT Prep Course over six weeks. Nineteen students completed the course and 18 took the post-test ACCUPLACER after the class.

67% of the students experienced improved placing in the ACCUPLACER test as follows:

* 22% placed at least one level higher in remedial math than in the pre-test.
* 28% became exempt from a remedial English course
* 33% became exempt from all remedial math courses through either a qualifying SAT score or an improved ACCUPLACER score.

Based on these statistics, WCCC began looking into alternatives to traditional remediation efforts.

### Pathways Initiatives

The Pathways Initiative was an outgrowth of Board of Trustee required initiatives in Strategic Plan 2020 to support student success. During 2015, various speakers were brought in to discuss new pathways for student success, including: Cheryl Orr Dixon from Complete College America, Dr. Davis Jenkins from the Community College Research Center, and Leith Sharp from the Harvard School of Public Health.

Using the Remedial Education Consultant Program Review Report and the preliminary findings from the College Readiness grant, the Board required the College to develop several approaches to improve retention and graduation rates ([**Pathways Initiative**](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Pathways%20Initiatives%20for%20Middle%20States.docx)) by focusing on streamlining the remediation process. This became a key element of the Strategic Plan 2020; the goals that focus on remedial education were as follows:

* Create a program to improve remedial education placement, sequence & outcomes. (**Redesign of remedial education)**
* Establish a plan whereby all students enrolled in developmental education courses will review their academic degree plan with an advisor each semester prior to registration. (**Advising Services)**
* Create a “fast track” strategy for students to bypass traditional developmental education courses; with co-requisite credit options combined in the strategy. (**Alternative Placement Strategies**)
* Examine the outcomes of using GPA and/or PARCC assessment for ability over the traditional ACCUPLACER placement strategy. (**Alternative Placement Strategies)**
* Implement and evaluate “Boot Camp” strategies improving ACCUPLACER placement assessments. (**Math Boot Camps**)
* Examine the potential of incorporating additional resources into remedial education outcomes improvements such as, dedicated computer labs, supplemental tutoring, and developmental course “test-out” prep sessions. (**Remedial Lab Services**)
* Dedicate resources to the professional development and change process associated with remedial education renewal. (**Professional Development**)

These initiatives are known on campus as the “Pathways Initiative.” This initiative was introduced to the campus community in February 2015 (see [Pathways In-Service Presentation](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Pathways%20Initiatives%20In-Service%20Presentation.pptx)). Key elements of this initative are discussed in more details below with preliminary results from those that have been implemented.

**Math Boot Camps**

The research with the high school students and the Kaplan Prep (which is not intended to provide math remediation, but rather provide review information and test taking strategies) convinced WCCC that a boot camp approach could assist students. Beginning in summer 2015, WCCC began offering math boot camps to students needing some refresher work in math with the goal of moving students into college level math. Four sessions over two summers have occurred to date. Of those who participated in the boot camp, 44% of those placed out of remedial math after completion of the boot camp. These sections, while serving a relatively low percentage of students, have led to significant success, as shown in Chart V-2.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart V-2 Mathematics Boot Camp Results** | | | | |
|  | **2015** | | **2016** | **2017** |
|  | **EOF** | **Combined Sessions** | **Combined Sessions** | **Winter Session** |
| Number of Students | 16 | 34 | 20 | 7 |
| Placed one level higher | 25.0% | 44.1% | NA\* | NA\* |
| Placed out of remediation | 18.7% | 29.4% | 70.0% | 85.0% |

\*Only one level of remediation was available.

**Efforts to Streamline the Remedial Math Sequence**

Prior to 2015-16, many WCCC programs encouraged students to complete College Algebra. This was correct advice for students in STEM programs, however, most students were not on a STEM track and only a few students graduate from STEM programs (see [Graduates by Major](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Grads%20by%20Major.xlsx)). Based on ACCUPLACER scores, few new students placed directly into college-level Algebra or Pre-calculus.

To qualify to enter College Algebra, some students needed to successfully complete three remedial mathematics courses: MAT 050 (Basic Math), MAT 051 (Elementary Algebra), and MAT052 (Intermediate Algebra). This would result in completing four mathematics classes to graduate, of which only one carried college credits. Four semesters of mathematics for students who were not mathematically inclined was deemed a barrier of success. It also was costly for students, as they would have to pay for nine credits of non-transferrable remedial mathematics.

Expediting remediation was deemed a priority. The College attempted, with limited success, to offer a combined Introductory/Intermediate Algebra Class (MAT 053) to help student’s fast track into College Algebra. Unfortunately, this course required a major time commitment (six hours per week of class time) and was difficult for students with constrained scheduling. As a result, this course was not continued into 2016-17.

Students who placed into MAT 050 and MAT 051 tended to have difficulty completing curricular requirements, particularly completion of the College Algebra course. These challenges are shown in Chart V-3 for the fall 2015 cohort, which indicates that students starting in MAT 050 or MAT 151 largely have not successfully completed a college mathematics requirement even three semesters after taking their initial mathematics course.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart V-3 Subsequent Mathmatics Success of Fall 2015 Remedial Math Students** | | |
|  | **MAT050** | **MAT 051** |
| **Fall 2015 Remedial Cohort** | **Basic Math.** | **Intro to Algebra** |
| Total Students | 83 | 85 |
| Number First Semester (New) Students | 70 | 45 |
| New Students as a % of Total | 84% | 53% |
| Of the New Student Cohort: |  |  |
| % Retained through Spring 2017 | 44% | 51% |
| % Passing One College-Level Math Class | 23% | 27% |

**Redesign of the Mathematics Curriculum Requirements**

During the 2015-16, the Mathematics Department redesigned the remedial math curriculum along with the general realignment of many curricula as part of the reexamination of credit loads in each academic program. Major changes were made as follows:

1. Basic Math (MAT050) and Introductory Algebra (MAT051) were eliminated.
2. Three new courses were created: MAT 054 (Basic Algebra) and MAT 150 (Elements of Statistics), and MAT 104 (Technical Mathematics). All of these courses were approved by the C & I and the NJ Course Review committee. MAT 102 and MAT 150 were also approved by the NJ General Education Committee.
3. Rather than a standard mathematics sequence, three separate mathematics tracks for approved for students as follows:

1. STEM Track

STEM majors would be on a College Algebra track. These students, if underprepared, would take MAT 052 (Intermediate Algebra). Statistics (MAT 151) would also require either testing out of MAT 052 or completion of Intermediate Algebra.

1. Non-STEM Track

Non-STEM majors needing remediation would be placed in a new course, MAT 054 (Basic Algebra). This class was developed with an optional lab component for students needing additional assistance. Once successfully completing MAT 054, students could take at least one of the following: MAT 110 (Topics of Mathematics), MAT 111 (Mathematics for Business and Economics or “Business Math”), and/or Elements of Statistics.[[23]](#footnote-23) Elements of Statistics was designed to focus on applied statistics and therefore did not require a mastery of intermediate algebra.

1. A.A.S. Track

A third track was devised for students in A.A.S. programs, particularly Food and Beverage Management and Automotive Technology. These programs do not require mastery of theoretical mathematical concepts, but require a mastery of technical mathematical concepts, such as ratios and proportions, metric measures, geometry, and practical algebra. MAT 104 (Technical Mathematics) was created to address these needs.

In addition to the change in track, the College began using high school transcripts, rather than just placement testing, to assess college-readiness for mathematics. Also, during 2015-16, WCCC began credentialing high school mathematics classes as dual enrollment remedial courses. The result of these combined efforts have been dramatic, with an 88% drop in the remedial mathematics enrollment, as shown below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart V-4: Remedial Mathematics Enrollment by Academic Year (Fall and Spring** | | | | | |
| **Remedial Course** | **2012-13** | **2013-14** | **2014-15** | **2015-16** | **2016-17** |
| MAT 050 | 328 | 234 | 201 | 105 | 0 |
| MAT 051 | 377 | 314 | 311 | 152 | 0 |
| MAT 052 | 184 | 166 | 163 | 95 | 23 |
| MAT 053 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 0 |
| MAT 054 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 89 |
| TOTAL | 900 | 714 | 675 | 370 | 112 |

While remedial mathematics has experienced a significant drop, 100-level mathematics[[24]](#footnote-24) has declined only 16% (during a time when overall enrollments decreased by 31%). It is clear that proportionately more students are placing directly into college level mathematics and that their pass rates are comparable to prior years. This is shown in Chart V5.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart V-5 Pass Rates Remedial vs. College-Level Mathematics** | | | | |
|  | **Remedial Math** | | **100 Level Math** | |
| **Year** | **Enrollment** | **Pass Rate** | **Enrollment** | **Pass Rate** |
| 2012-13 | 900 | 61% | 602 | 73% |
| 2013-14 | 714 | 69% | 572 | 76% |
| 2014-15 | 675 | 65% | 525 | 80% |
| 2015-16 | 370 | 67% | 558 | 76% |
| 2016-17 | 112 | 69% | 503 | 77% |

The changes to the mathematics curriculum were implemented for the 2016-17 academic year. One change that was immediately noted was that new students, freed from the prospect of three potential remedial semesters of remedial mathematics, were not necessarily attempting math in their first semester of college. With only two semesters since implementation, it is too soon to determine how the redesign of remedial mathematics impact retention and graduation, however, early results are positive. The College will continue to follow the initial 2016-17 cohort of mathematics students to determine the retention and graduation of students under the streamlined placement/remediation process.

**Alternative Placement Strategies (English)**

Upon a review of the ACCUPLACER placement instrument by the employees and Board of Trustees, there was concern regarding the College’s reliance on a 20-question test for determining the need for one or more semesters of remedial English courses. As noted previously, beginning in fall 2015, the College implemented alternative placement strategies for course placement. Students who could demonstrate strong grades in high school English were permitted to place into college-level English. This resulted in a significant increase in college level English placement and a significant decrease in remedial education.

One could have expected that this change could have resulted in a significant reduction in college level English passing rates. However, that has not been the case. Based on a comprehensive [English Remediation Analysis](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\English%20Remediation%20Report.docx) conducted with 2015-16 and 2016-17 data, the results were as follows:

1. Since the College adjusted and refined the standards on placement into remediation, there has been a significant increase in the number of completers in the English sequence, especially taking into account the College’s enrollment decline since 2011-12.
2. While WCCC might expect that placing more students into college level English classes should result in decreased student success in both English Composition I and II (ENG140 and ENG141), the opposite has been demonstrated to be true; course success rates have stayed the same or increased in college-level English.
3. As a whole, students who went directly into college-level English since WCCC reduced remedial requirements perform better than those who used the traditional remedial path by various measures.
4. Students who pass ENG140 who did not take remediation also demonstrated greater success in ENG 141 than their remedial-prepared counterparts did.

Chart V-6 indicates the change in enrollments from fall 2011 to fall 2016.

As the chart indicates, there has been a very large increase in the number of students in English Composition I (ENG 140) and a large decrease in remedial English (related to both enrollment declines and the placement of more students in English Composition I). At the same time, the pass rates in English Composition I have not declined during this period (in fact, they have increased). These statics appear to demonstrate that the placement of additional students in English Composition I (instead of remedial courses) does not adversely affect student success.

Most notably, this change has resulted in more students completing the final English requirement for graduation. From 2011-12 to 2016-17, the number of students completing English Composition II increased from 402 to 448 students, an 11% increase, with pass rates remaining essentially unchanged. At the same time, college FTE enrollments declined 31%. This indicates proportionately that more students are successfully completing their English requirements for graduation.

WCCC will continue to review statistics for future cohorts; however, the initial review is very promising in for the alternative college placement strategies in both mathematics and English.

**Remedial Lab Services**

A recommendation for enhancing remedial education that has yet to be fulfilled is one focusing on offering a computer lab for homework and tutorials. The College plans to remedy this through the construction of the Learning Annex, which will house a computer lab that includes self-paced software to benefit students. While there are computers in the Instructional Support Center, there is no lab on campus during the academic year that focuses on tutorials and self-paced learning. The Learning Annex is scheduled to be operational during fall 2018.

### Overall Student Success Measures and Indicators

Beyond efforts on enhancing remedial education and streamlining credit requirements, WCCC has focused on retention and graduation initiatives. The 3C Week, sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) each fall focuses on student success and encourages all students to sign a pledge to graduate. Notably, WCCC’s 3C Events have been featured by the Council of County Colleges as they include not only faculty and staff, but also Board of Trustee members. The 3C banner, signed by current students, is displayed prominently in the College’s entrance.

Efforts to recognize student success have been heartily endorsed by the Board of Trustees. Understanding the role of student/peer mentoring and the importance of recognizing student achievement, the Board of Trustees allocated a reserve of $50,000 to support PTK leadership activities, including the College’s participation in annual PTK events.

Based on statistics over the past year, it appears that overall student success has improved at WCCC, as shown below and discussed above with remediation reform efforts. The College will need to monitor success statistics to determine whether the most recent statistics are part of a trend in increased student success.

* Retention

As the chart below indicates, the College’s fall-to-fall retention rate has remained consistent over the past several years at around 63%. Recent retention data are shown in Chart V-9, which shows that the latest retention rate (Fall 2016 to Fall 2017) is the highest ever achieved by the College (68%).

The retention rates above reflect all first-time students. When part-time students are excluded, the fall-to-fall retention rate for both fall 2015 and fall 2016 cohorts was 70%.

* Graduation Rates

Chart V-9 indicates the two-year, three- year and four-year graduation rates for first-time, full-time students, as reported in IPEDS.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart V-9: Graduation Rates** | | | |
| **Fall Cohort Year** | **2 Year** | **3 Year** | **4 Year** |
| 2010 | 18% | 20% | 25% |
| 2011 | 25% | 25% | 28% |
| 2012 | 13% | 23% | 39% |
| 2013 | 21% | 30% | 43% |
| 2014 | 17% | 35% | Not avail |
| 2015 | 20% | Not avail | Not avail |

The significant increase in the three-year and four-year cohorts is especially notable. This increase may or may not be a product of changes in the graduation requirements instituted for the 2016-17 academic year. However, the data also notes an increase in the three-year graduation rates over the five-year period. WCCC will continue to monitor the graduation rates to determine whether recent results represent trend data for the College.

**IPEDS Outcomes Data**

During 2016-17, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System *(*IPEDS*)* instituted new reporting requirements for institutions, which included reporting of cohorts beyond first-time full-time students (Outcomes Data). The initial survey cohort was for 2008. WCCC data from this survey indicates significant student success, particularly for readmitted (non-first time) students as shown in Chart V-10.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart V-10: Fall 2008 Cohort Data (IPEDS Outcome Data)** | | | | |
| Cohort | 6 Year Graduation  Rate | 8 Year Graduation Rate | Still Enrolled | Transferred to another institution |
| Full-Time, First-Time | 33% | 33% | 2% | 27% |
| Part-Time, First-Time | 36% | 36% | 10% | 25% |
| Full-Time, Not First-Time | 66% | 66% | 0% | 29% |
| Part-Time, Not First-Time | 51% | 51% | 2% | 20% |

As Chart V-10 indicates, the six-year graduation rates indicate sizeable success rate for all categories of students. Further, as noted in the graduation rates in the prior section, student graduation rates continue to improve for WCCC students, indicative of the overall success of WCCC programs.

**Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA)** **Data**

In addition to (analyzing) graduation data, the College began participating in the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) in 2017. The current year survey examined the fall 2010 cohort and compared total student, credential seeking and first time in college cohorts. The data below, for full-time students, indicates that just under 50% of full-time students who successfully completed 12 credits within their first two years have earned either a certificate or an associate’s degree. (Nearly all of the students reported as “awarded” in Chart V-11 earned an associate’s degree. WCCC awards only a handful of credit program certificates per year.)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart V-11: VFA Data for Full-Time Students** | | | |
| **2010 Cohort** | **Total VFA Cohort** | **Credential Seeking** | **First Time in College** |
| Still Enrolled | 3.1% | 3.4% | 3.9% |
| No Award (Transfer) | 12.0% | 9.3% | 11.3% |
| Earned Awards | 38.7% | 49.7% | 36.1% |

## Summary

The Assessment Committee, developed in 2015, has re-invigorated academic assessment by eliminating redundant and less helpful activities in favor of a streamlined annual outcomes assessment process and a redesigned program review process. The College has used data to determine whether program changes appear to be improving student success.

Although WCCC is a small campus with limited staffing and resources, there is a strong commitment to student learning and toward ensuring the effectiveness of program offerings. WCCC has demonstrated that it is able to make significant adjustments to its curriculum in a very short time. The redesign of remedial education and the reduction of program credit loads are examples of this. The College’s committees, including its Curriculum and Instruction Committee and the Assessment Committee, along with WCCC full-time teaching professionals, deserve much credit for embracing change and adjusting curricula accordingly.

WCCC continues to monitor class and program size and has used data to make difficult decisions, including placing programs on hiatus until new options can be considered. The College has experimented with new programs and services, but has not been afraid to change direction when initiatives are deemed ineffective.

## Institutional Opportunities

* WCCC should evaluate the effectiveness of changes implemented by the Assessment Committee and make additional modifications as necessary.
* As part of a renewed program review process, WCCC should re-examine the use of pre and post testing and determine if other more robust option(s) may be more meaningful for the assessment of student learning.

# Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

*The institution’s planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.*

## Requirements of Affiliation

This chapter addresses the following Requirements of Affiliation:

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

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

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

## Overview

Warren County Community College has a five-year strategic plan covering 2015 through 2019 that focuses on eight goal areas. In the two years since the implementation of the plan, the College has achieved accomplishments in each of the goal areas. Since 2004, the Strategic Plan in effect at the time has formed the basis of annual Departmental Plans and employee Personal Plans. Each non-faculty employee undertakes a review with the President to discuss progress on Personal Plans and Departmental Plans. Progress toward the Strategic Plan also is reviewed annually with the Board of Trustees and the campus community.

Like any other community college, resources remain a challenge for WCCC. However, unlike many NJ community colleges, WCCC has not had to focus on the retrenchment of employees or drastic reductions in operating budgets. The College has had positive net revenue every year since 2003 and has allocated these revenues to specific capital projects.

## Discussion and Analysis

### Strategic Plan

WCCC’s most recent strategic plan, [Strategic Plan 2020](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\WCCC-Strategic-Plan.pdf), is the third consecutive strategic plan initiated under the leadership of the current President. This plan focuses on initiatives to be implemented during the 2014-19 timeframe. As noted under Standard 1, the Strategic Plan was developed by a series of working groups focused on seven goal areas during 2014-15. The plan also included two “visioning sessions” (Board of Trustees and employees) that helped frame several of the new initiatives.

There are eight goal areas of the Strategic Plan as follows:

1. Outcomes Assessment and Program Review
2. Developmental Education Assessment
3. Enrollment and Retention
4. Distance Education
5. Workforce and Economic Development
6. Human Resources Planning
7. Facilities Planning
8. Enterprise Resource Planning System Implementation

**Implementation of the Strategic Plan**

Each goal area has three to eight strategies and every strategy is assigned to a senior staff member for overall implementation. The status of these strategies, along with annual operating goals, are included in the Departmental plans for each division. Each Departmental Plan must cross-reference applicable Strategic Planning strategies. Departments develop, update, and complete this plan annually. A college-wide matrix shows the cross-linking of the strategies with projects and activities undertaken by each office is shown for the [Departmental Plan results for 2016-17](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Departmental%20Plan%20Results%20%202016-17.pdf).

### Assessment of the Strategic Plan

Progress on the implementation of the Strategic Plan is reviewed annually with the Board of Trustees. Progress on Strategic Plan 2020 was reviewed by the Board of Trustees in [November 2016](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Strategic%20Planning%20Goal%20Progress%20Nov%202016.pdf) and [November 2017](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Strategic%20Planning%20Update%20Nov%202017.pdf). Employee evaluations, along with the [annual presidential evaluation](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Presidential%20Evaluation%20Instrument.pdf), focus on the implementation of strategic goals, in addition to general college administrative functions.

Highlights from these reviews include the following:

**Goal Area #1: Outcomes Assessment and Program Review**

During 2015-16, based on a [Consultant's Review on Assessment](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%205%20Links\Consultant's%20Report%20on%20Assessment.docx), the College established an Assessment Committee, which was to provide guidance to other college assessment committees, including the long-standing Outcomes Assessment/Program Review (OA/PR) committee. The Assessment Committee has made various recommendations over the past two years, which have been implemented, including:

* 1. Change of the program review cycle from five years to three years;
  2. Enhance the [program review template](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Program%20Review%20Template.docx) to streamline and to make the process more meaningful for departments;
  3. Replace the Outcomes Assessment (OA) process and the annual faculty report with the new [Instructor Outcomes Assessment Report](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Instructor%20Outcomes%20Assessment%20Form.docx);
  4. Change the focus on the OA/PR Committee to have the Committee Chair work individually with faculty and teaching administrators preparing program review reports; and
  5. Update of all master syllabi to tie in learning goals and assessment. Master syllabi were also added to the website for general access.

**Goal Area #2: Developmental Education**

As noted more thoroughly under Standards III and V, the revamping of developmental education has been one of the highest priorities of the College over the past two years. Initiatives implemented to enhance student success by WCCC include:

* 1. Use alternative measures to assess college readiness, including high school transcripts and GPAs rather than relying solely on ACCUPLACER for placement;
  2. Develop a two-week math boot camp to enable students to move into higher level remediation or college-level mathematics;
  3. Design three new mathematics courses:
     1. Basic Algebra (MAT 054) to replace MAT 050 and MAT 051, a remedial math class for non-STEM students;
     2. College-level Technical Math (MAT 102) for A.A.S. programs, particularly Food and Beverage Management and Automotive Technology; and
     3. A new Fundamentals of Statistics courses for non-STEM majors that focus on the application of statistical analysis in topical areas;
  4. Designate learning lab space to support remedial and self-paced learning (this is included in the Learning Annex project).

**Goal Area #3: Enrollment and Retention**

Enrollment initiatives over the past two years have focused on a significant expansion of the dual enrollment program. A new [Enrollment Management Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Enrollment%20Management%20Plan.docx) was developed in 2016 to support enrollment management initiatives.

Retention activities primarily focused on curricula realignment, including:

1. Implement a mandatory new student orientation program to replace the First Year Experience class (FYE101);
2. Initiation of new online tools for students, including a degree audit worksheet, electronic retention alerts, “what if GPA calculator and major exploration;
3. Realignment of programs to comply with the 60 credit program requirement for most academic programs (which helps promote affordability);
4. Restructuring of general education requirements to focus on meeting the needs of both STEM and non-STEM students;
5. Use of alternative methods to college-level mathematics and English placement through use of alternative means to ACCUPLACER testing, including the evaluation of high school courses;
6. Creation of three mathematics courses to streamline remediation and provide course alternatives for non-STEM students in transfer and career programs; and
7. Establishment of a Dean of Learning to focus on services to enhance retention efforts.

**Goal Area #4: Distance Education**

The implementation of a new Learning Management System (LMS), which is integrated with the student information system (Jenzabar EX), allowed the College to re-examine and enhance distance education services. Improvements in distance education services were as follows:

1. Develop a formalized instructor training program for online instructors;
2. Implement a course audit process, which enables distance education instructors to demonstrate that the online courses have the same rigor as traditional courses;
3. Use a standardized course template for all online courses and ground course supplemental learning materials;
4. Enhance student and instructor tutorials to demonstrate the features of the LMS system;
5. Create of a new Distance Education Instructor Manual to not only define the expectations for instructors, but to document some “best practices” for distance education;
6. Develop and implement of a new instructor evaluation tool.

**Goal Area #5: Workforce and Economic Development**

Workforce and economic development initiatives have focused on extending WCCC training initiatives to new market areas through new partnerships. Key initiatives completed include:

1. Create the Skylands Training Partnership with Sussex County Community College. WCCC has become the provider of training in Sussex County continuing education services. This initiative is the first partnership between two regional community colleges to offer noncredit programs;
2. Expand relationships with vendors outside of Warren County, particularly in customized training in adjacent counties and Pennsylvania;
3. Partner with Complete Learning Solutions to offer customized noncredit training employees for Verizon employees;
4. Lease a portion of the Phillipsburg Education Center (PEC) to the NJ Department of Labor’s One-Stop Career Center to enable a stronger relationship between the College and state non-credit funding sources;
5. Partner with the Warren County Technical School’s GED program, which also was recently relocated to the PEC; and
6. Expand companies and organizations served by the Small Business Growth Development Center in the PEC.

**Goal Area #6: Human Resources Planning**

Human Resources planning involves the creation of tools and programs to ensure not only that the College complies with governmental requirements. Initiatives completed as part of this goal include:

1. Develop a Board, Presidential, and staff succession plan to ensure that WCCC services can be effectively delivered during periods of transition;
2. Provide annual Title IX training and training on specialized topics such as suicide prevention, ethics, and harassment;
3. Support employee and faculty professional development in areas including institutional assessment, program and college accreditation, campus “best practices” as well as conferences and workshops in employees’ disciplines or program areas; and
4. Facilitate presentations during semester In-Service and faculty kick-off sessions on streamlining remediation and creating new pathways for students.

**Goal Area #7: Facilities Planning**

Facility initiatives have focused on the replacement/upgrade of existing facilities as well as the construction of a Learning Annex, which will include a large lecture hall, a learning lab, faculty offices, a connector to the main facility, and ADA compliant restrooms. Various initiatives undertaken over the past two years include:

1. Upgrade of the Instructional Support Center (ISC) to expand tutoring and testing areas and enhance student learning accommodations;
2. Replace failing brickwork in the main Washington entranceway with concrete and the creation of two new patio areas in the back of the Washington facility;
3. Repave the main parking lot and expand handicapped access to the main facility;
4. Reconfigure leased space in the PEC to allow for new tenants in that area and the College’s assumption of the Warren County GED program;
5. Complete various renewal and replacement projects in Washington, including an upgrade to the HVAC controller system, boiler replacement, and roof repairs to extend the life of the roofing system;
6. Undertake on-going cosmetic upgrades including furnishing replacement, painting, and carpeting replacement at the Washington campus; and
7. Demolish the aging trailer classrooms (no longer adequate for classroom use) in preparation of the Learning Annex building.

**Goal Area #8: Enterprise Resource Planning System Implementation**

WCCC converted to the Jenzabar EX Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP) in late June 2015 after an eighteen-month implementation cycle. Add on features were introduced in 2015-16. The ERP project included the following:

1. Implement a windows-based system that integrated with the standalone financial aid system (the College Board’s Powerfaids system);
2. Introduce a new Learning Management System (Jenzabar e-Learning) that is integrated with the ERP system;
3. Provide an online registration product that indicated whether a course applied to the student’s major;
4. Enable online advising options, including a GPA calculator and a “what if” calculation on courses that would count in the event that a student changed majors;
5. Support a mobile app that supports the LMS, student registration, scheduling, and grade information;
6. Implement a purchasing module that allows for electronic approvals and receiving functions; and
7. Provide a report-writing product along with a number of “canned” queries that provide for easy access of data through Excel.

As part of the implementation, the College underwent four cycles of system training and had on-site coordinators to assist with data conversion and “go live” training with each office area. Consultants provided training to key members of each office and returned in 2016 to provide refresher training and to help build new queries for employees.

### Other College Planning Initiatives

* **Facilities Master Plan**

The most recent [Facilities Master Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Facility%20Master%20Plan-Reduced.pdf) was developed by SSP Architects and approved by the Board of Trustees in 2010. This plan, along with the engineering work that accompanied its development, noted a challenge with any major site expansion on the Washington campus. The College is limited in growth due to the county sewer plant that serves WCCC, Warren County Vo-Tech, and the 911 Emergency Center. Without a major expansion/replacement of the sewer plant or an extension of the Washington Borough sewer line (both prohibitively expensive options), there are limited growth opportunities on the Washington site.

With that in mind, the Facilities Master Plan called for limited expansion on the Washington campus, including development of the site that will house the Learning Annex. The plan called for the College to focus on the expansion of facility options in other locations of Warren County.

WCCC, located in Washington Township, is approximately within ten miles of two larger municipalities: Phillipsburg (to the west) and Hackettstown (to the northeast). All three locations are connected via Route 57. Without the opportunity for significant development in Washington Township, the facilities master plan recommended alternative location(s).

In 2011, the College acquired a 52,000 square foot facility in Phillipsburg. The Phillipsburg Education Center (PEC) serves the Continuing Education programs and offices, and includes a Small Business Growth Center and rental space for educational, governmental, and non-profit agencies.

The Facilities Master Plan also called for the development of the Health Sciences Center in Hackettstown on the campus of the Hackettstown Medical Center (HMC) campus. The College had worked extensively with the prior owners of the hospital to develop a plan for an 8,000 square foot building and had planned to seek state bond funds to help support construction. Because of the 2016 sale of the hospital to Atlantic Healthcare, this project has been temporarily been put on moratorium. As Hackettstown is completely developed and the “Highlands Act” prohibits development in other municipalities in the area, the hospital generously offering land will be the only means of adding a location in that quadrant of Warren County.

* **Facilities Renewal and Replacement Plans**

WCCC’s initial campus facility was completed in 1995. This building was expanded in 2000 with a small addition. A larger East Wing and a café addition were constructed in 2009. Finally, the library was renovated in 2011 and a mezzanine was added to this facility.

Several major renewal and replacement projects have been undertaken to support the Washington campus. The initial boilers were replaced and the HVAC units have been upgraded with new controller systems. In the summer of 2017, the College completed roof repairs to extend the life of the initial campus roofing system. Parking lot, ADA accessibility, and sidewalk replacement projects also have been completed over the past three summers. The server room HVAC system also was replaced in spring 2017.

To help guide the systemic replacement and upgrade of the College’s infrastructure, WCCC has relied on renewal and replacement plans developed by its professional consultants. The latest mechanical plans, which were updated in 2017, address projects for both the [Phillipsburg](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\WCCC%20Phillipsburg%20Campus%20Maintenance%20Report.pdf) and [Washington](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\WCCC%20Washington%20Campus%20Maintenance%20Report-2017.pdf) facilities. The next major project will be the replacement of the boiler system at the Phillipsburg site in summer 2018. An analysis was undertaken in 2016 of all the College’s [roofing systems](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Roof%20Analysis.pdf), with the understanding that roofing upgrade/replacement of the initial campus roof would begin in the summer of 2019. Replacement of the original HVAC units in Washington will occur shortly thereafter. While the College would pursue any public bond funds to address the costs of these projects, it has set aside capital funds to support critical priorities. These are detailed in the [FY17 Audit](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\WCCC%202017%20Audit.pdf) under the Management Discussion and Analysis.

In addition to these plans, in 2016-17 the College pursued a study through the [Energy Saving Improvement Program (ESIP)](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Honeywell%20ESIP%20Proposal.pdf), which focuses on the replacement or upgrade of fixtures and equipment to result in energy savings on the campus. The equipment would be financed through the ESIP provider. To qualify for this program, the College went through an energy audit and a preliminary review of possible options. Proposers were then invited to submit proposals for possible energy savings projects. Unfortunately, the newness of the WCCC facilities along with the size of the campus did not make the project very cost effective for ESIP vendors. The College received one proposal in 2017 and elected to defer action on the ESIP program as the potential savings were a deterrent to action. WCCC also has examined solar opportunities twice over the past two years. This may be something that is re-examined after the completion of the Learning Annex.

A final capital priority would be the upgrade of the current security camera system. WCCC was one of the first community colleges in NJ to implement a security camera system for both internal spaces and external grounds. The current system uses older technology, which provides for less clarity than state-of-the-art-equipment. The Coordinator of Campus Security currently is examining grant options to support an upgraded camera system.

Although the College has plans in place to address renewal and replacement needs, it lacks a multi-year plan to delineate the priorities of these projects and cost estimates for many initiatives. This will be an outcome of future and replacement planning initiatives.

* **Technology Plan**

In February 2013, the Board of Trustees approved a Long-Term Technology Plan, a requirement for the submission of competitive grants for the Equipment Leasing Fund (ELF) and the Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Fund (HETI) proposal. For WCCC, this plan was the successor to the College’s 2007 Technology Plan, which prescribed a technology replacement plan through 2011. The College was successful in obtaining $500,000 through the ELF grant and $417,000 from the HETI grant.

In September 2017, the Board of Trustees approved a new [Five-Year Technology Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\5-Year%20Technology%20Plan.pdf), which incorporates three new projects for the College: firewall replacement, upgrade of the Washington phone system to VOIP, and provision of technology hardware for the new Learning Annex. The plan details upgrades of nearly all WCCC computer equipment over the next five years (including computer labs and servers). It also calls for a total investment of $1.069 million. WCCC has set aside funding to support the first three years of the plan.

The replacement of the firewall is important, as it would enable the expansion of the College’s bandwidth through a new provider at a potentially reduced cost. The College’s internet pipeline is 100mgps, which currently meets the needs of both Washington and Phillipsburg sites, but will need to be upgraded in the future. With the replacement of the firewall, WCCC could move to either 500mgps with reduced cost or potentially expand services to 1gps. The College’s network service provider currently is reviewing options for both equipment and internet services. WCCC expects to purchase the firewall and expand bandwidth for the 2018-19 academic year.

* **Enrollment Management Plan**

In 2016, the College revised its [Enrollment Management Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Enrollment%20Management%20Plan.docx). This plan, similar to previous iterations, focuses on marketing programs and services to the residents of Warren County. The College recognizes its mission is to serve the residents of its home county with programs, services, and facilities that are congruent with the expectations of both students and citizens of the county.

### Linkage of Planning and Budget

As a small campus, the linkage between planning and budgeting is critical to accomplish the initiatives that have been undertaken in the Strategic Planning process. Most of the strategic planning initiatives (other than capital) were designed to be supported through existing resources. In most cases, the College reallocates positions and resources to meet emerging needs, rather than adding new positions. Some examples of resource allocation/reallocation to support planning priorities include:

* Establishment of two teaching administrator positions to support the Pathways, Developmental Education enhancement and to enhance student retention efforts (combined investment of approximately $140,000 annually).
* Reallocation of a staffing position to support student recruitment needs.
* Reallocation of administrative positions to support a Dean’s position in Academic Affairs to support distance education and enhanced student retention and achievement (approximately $95,000).
* Reallocation of staffing responsibilities in Continuing Education area to support the expansion of services in Sussex County (no additional positions).
* Investment of at least $75,000 annually in education and professional development to enhance the WCCC workforce.
* Allocation of at least $150,000 annually to support specific capital renewal and replacement needs.

WCCC annually sets aside funds to support one-time capital needs, such as construction and capital renewal projects. From time to time, WCCC has been able to take advantage of bond or grant funds to support certain one-time (primarily capital) expenses. This includes 50% of the funding for the new ERP/LMS system and approximately 63% of the Building Annex Project. Each of these projects support strategic priorities. The balance of these projects were paid through net revenues designated by the Board to support the College match for these projects. This is discussed further on page 101.

### Budget Process

The College’s fiscal year, which coincides with the State of NJ’s fiscal year, is from July 1-June 30. The College’s budget cycle, using the example of the FY18 budget, is typically as follows:

* **January 2017**: A preliminary budget is developed based on fall and spring enrollment data, estimated available resources and the Board’s strategic priorities and reviewed by College executive staff.
* **February 22, 2017**: A budget proposal is considered by the Board of Trustees and the County Board of School Estimate (BOSE) (see [sample BOSE presentation](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Board%20of%20School%20Estimate%20%20Budget%20Presentation%20Feb%208th%20Presentation.pdf)). The County Freeholders also approved the county budget later that evening.
* **June 28, 2017**: The College Board of Trustees approved a budget for the College along with formal tuition and fee rates.
* **July 5, 2017**: The Governor signed the FY18 Appropriations Act, which included a “lump sum” appropriation for the county college sector. A preliminary state allocation was provided to each community college. (The final budget was signed by the Governor on July 5, 2017).
* **February 2018**: As necessary, a revised mid-year budget is submitted for consideration to the Board of Trustees as part of the approval of next year’s preliminary budget.
* **By May 2018**: FY18 state funding by institution is finalized. Adjustments are made in the June drawdown.

During the fiscal year, the College monitors the annual budget to ensure that resources and expenses are within planned levels. Monthly financial reports are provided to the Board of Trustees ([see sample report for December 2017](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Sample%20Board%20Report%20Dec%202017.pdf)).

### Operating Revenues

The College annually adopts a balanced budget. FY18 approved revenues by category are shown proportionately by category in Chart VI-1.

Tuition and fees (including continuing and corporate education revenues) reflect half of the operating budget. Government support provides; nearly 46% of the College’s unrestricted revenue; the balance is from “other” revenues (rental income, commission income).

The relative percentage supported by category has varied somewhat over the past five years, reflecting enrollment changes. At one point, during the enrollment boom of FY11, tuition and fees reflected nearly 60% of overall revenues.

### Enrollment Data

The budget and expenses of the College reflect estimated revenue from credit and non-credit tuition and fees. The revenue is primarily tied to enrollment levels, which have fluctuated over the past decade, consistent with the trend in the community college sector. Chart VI-2 indicates audited credit hour enrollment since FY08.

The black line in Chart VI-2 indicates total credit hours, which are used to allocate a portion of state funding to the College. WCCC was allocated $845,973 in state funding in FY17 for audited credit hours (representing 38% of the total state funding for the College in that year).

The red line reflects on-campus credit students, while the blue line reflects dual enrollment credits. Unlike other NJ community colleges, WCCC does not charge tuition to defray the costs of dual enrollment as a public service to the students in the region.[[25]](#footnote-25) As discussed in Standard III, the significant growth of the dual enrollment program reflects the credentialing of additional general education electives for students. Dual credit is awarded to a student for a grade of C or better in an eligible course. Dual enrollment includes a few remedial course sections but WCCC does not include these credits as fundable audited enrollment as they are not college-level transferrable courses.

Warren County Community College’s on-campus enrollment has strongly followed both NJ and national trends with a significant growth in FY10 and FY11, reflecting the national community college trend related to the economic downturn. Enrollment also has been significantly affected by the drop in high school enrollments, which has occurred since 2009.

In addition to national economic and regional demographic trends, on-campus enrollment also reflect educational decisions made by WCCC to enhance student retention and completion. These include

1. The reduction in the number of program credits for associate degrees;
2. A steep decline in remedial course enrollment (reflecting alternate assessment methodologies for placement);
3. Elimination of the mandatory FYE course; and
4. An increase in the number of high school students coming to the College with dual enrollment credits (and therefore not needing certain electives at WCCC).

These changes are discussed in detail under Standards III, IV and V. Early evidence indicates that these changes are responsible for increases in retention and graduation rates and therefore are beneficial to Warren County College students. These decreases, which were temporarily also have affected enrollment, were anticipated and made purposely by the Board of Trustees.

* **Tuition and Fees**

The Warren County Board of Trustees establishes tuition and fee rates annually at their June meeting. These rates are effective for the upcoming academic year beginning September 1. Chart VI-3 indicates tuition and fee rates since FY13.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart VI-3: Tuition and Fee Charges FY13 through FY18** | | | | | | |
| **Category** | **FY13** | **FY14** | **FY15** | **FY16** | **FY17** | **FY18** |
| Tuition | $109.25 | $114.00 | $122.00 | $127.00 | $135.00 | $140.00 |
| Fees | 23.75 | 23.00 | 20.00 | 20.00 | 18.00 | 18.00 |
| Total | $133.00 | $137.00 | $142.00 | $147.00 | $153.00 | $158.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| $ Increase |  | $4.00 | $ 5.00 | $5.00 | $6.00 | $5.00 |
| % Increase |  | 3.00% | 3.60% | 3.50% | 4.10% | 3.30% |

Unlike a number of NJ community colleges, particularly those in northwestern NJ, WCCC has not had any significant rate changes over the past decade but has incrementally increased tuition. WCCC’s tuition is slightly below the statewide average for community colleges.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart VI-4: Fall 2017 In-County Tuition and Fees-Regional Community Colleges** | | | | |
|  | **Warren** | **Sussex** | **Raritan Valley** | **County College of Morris** |
| Per Credit Tuition | $140.00 | $140.00 | $147.00 | $125.00 |
| Per Credit Fees | 16.00 | 85.00 | 22.00 | 29.00 |
| Total Per Credit | $156.00 | $225.00 | $169.00 | $154.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Other Required Fees |  |  |  |  |
| Per Course Fees | 0.00 | $3.00 | 0.00 | $21.00 |
| Per Semester Fees | 0.00 | 0.00 | $132.00 | 0.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Estimated Semester Cost, 15 Credits** | **$2,340.00** | **$3,390.00** | **$2,667.00** | **$2,415.00** |

More importantly, as shown in Chart VI-4, the College has consistently had lower charges than the local northwestern NJ community colleges. Unlike its regional counterparts, WCCC does not charge course or semester fees, distance education, or graduation fees.

Unlike other regional community colleges, WCCC does not charge a significant differential for out-of-county students (see [WCCC tuition and fee rates](http://www.warren.edu/tuition/)). The tuition differentials for out-of-state students are as follows:

Warren: $ 20.00 per credit

Raritan Valley: $ 40.00 per credit

Sussex: $ 70.00 per credit

CCM: $125.00 per credit

While increasing out-of-county or out-of-state tuition could generate additional revenues, approximately 96% of the students at WCCC are in-county students. Since WCCC does not offer any unique programs, its courses are not eligible for outside county (chargeback) funding.

* **Government Support**

WCCC receives support from both Warren County and from the State of NJ. Warren County’s share of support is determined by overall county budgetary needs. Over the last six years, the County has experienced resource constraints from Governor Christie’s 2% spending “cap” on county budgets. State funding has similarly been constrained with a level appropriation provided to the community college sector over the past decade.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart VI-5: Government Funding FY12-FY17** | | | | |
|  | **County Funding** | **County Capital** | **State Funding** | **Total** |
| FY12 Actual | $1,877,106 | $6,750,000 | $2,256,156 | $10,883,262 |
| FY 13 Actual | $1,877,106 | 0 | $2,262,639 | $ 4,139,745 |
| FY14 Actual | $1,877,106 | 0 | $2,247,240 | $ 4,124,346 |
| FY15 Actual | $1,877,106 | 0 | $2,208,882 | $ 4,085,988 |
| FY16 Actual | $2,009,127 | 0 | $2,273,078 | $ 4,282,205 |
| FY17 Actual | $2,031,060 | 125,000 | $2,248,599 | $ 4,304,659 |

* **County Funding**

County funding is recommended each February by the Board of School Estimate (consisting of all three County Freeholders and two Board of Trustee members) and approved by the Freeholder Board in March or April for the calendar year. Freeholder support has remained strong to the College during the past decade.

In FY12, the county provided one-time capital support to fund the acquisition of the Phillipsburg Education Center (PEC). County operating support remained level for a four-year period because of an agreement between the county and the College to support the financing of the PEC facility. Since FY16, the county has supported increased allocations to WCCC to support various priorities, including expansion of dual enrollment and support of regional partnerships. The county provided the College with a $125,000 reimbursement on its parking lot repaving project. In addition, during FY18 and FY19, the county has pledged a total of $500,000 to support the construction of the new Learning Annex.

* **State Funding**

A single state appropriation is allocated to the community college sector. State funding is based on a complex formula that takes in account the following: FTEs for the prior year, fixed amounts set years ago for remedial education, foundation (base) funding for all colleges, and continuing education (at a rate fixed in 2006). WCCC receives the majority of its state funding (53% in FY17) from foundation (base) aid, which does not change from year to year. As operating aid to community colleges has not increased in the past decade, variances in state funding to WCCC have reflected the College’s enrollments in comparison to changes at other community colleges.

Final state funding is often not revealed to community colleges until April or May of the fiscal year (which ends in June). Because of this, WCCC tends to conservatively project annual state funding to the campus. Final adjustments in state aid are made in the June payment to colleges.

* **Continuing Education**

While the Continuing Education revenues are included under tuition and fees in the audit and various financial reports, they are budgeted separately by the College in the annual budget. These revenues have decreased over the past several years, largely due to the drop in the NJ unemployment rate.

From FY11 through FY16, WCCC participated in a NJ community college consortium that received federal Health Professions Opportunity Grant (HPOG) revenues. These funds provided tuition, fees, books, and childcare expenses for eligible students in various noncredit health care programs. Enrollments in some of the noncredit healthcare programs were impacted when this grant was not renewed by the federal government in 2016.

At this time, the primary public funds available to support noncredit students with financial need come from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).[[26]](#footnote-26) Students who complete these programs and meet placement/job retention requirements receive a $4,000 grant (or $5,000 for students 24 or younger). Over the past two years, WCCC has seen an increase in non-completers and in students that are not meeting placement requirements, resulting in additional write-offs for these programs. This also has affected total Continuing Education revenues.

The department focused on the development of additional career programs and reduced the number of personal enrichment and senior citizen courses, resulting in a reduction in the number of registrants in these programs. In addition, the emergence of local summer day-care programs has reduced enrollment in the more educationally based programs offered by WCCC’s summer enrichment programs geared toward 7-14-year-old youths.

A final factor in the reduction of Continuing Education revenues has been a decline in customized training enrollment. For several years, the College had a successful partnership with Complete Learning Systems, which offered noncredit technical training to Verizon workers. Since a Verizon worker strike in 2016, Verizon has reduced its commitment to noncredit training for its workers. This change, coupled with a loss of several major Warren County employers, has resulted in a significant reduction in customized training revenues.

To revitalize the Continuing Education enrollments and focus on regional needs in northwestern NJ, WCCC entered into an agreement with Sussex County Community College (SCCC) to offer joint continuing education and customized training opportunities in Sussex County beginning in fall 2016. Under the agreement, WCCC administers offerings of the Skylands Professional Training (SPT) and SCCC provides classroom space and equipment for training. Profits are divided equally between the two colleges. The SPT began with a limited schedule in FY17 and generated close to $100,000 in tuition/fee revenue, resulting in just under $38,000 in net revenue. Course offerings will be significantly expanded in FY18 in this joint venture.

* **Other Revenues**

Other revenues normally comprise vendor (bookstore) income, rental income, facility use fees, and miscellaneous student income (for external testing and minor library fines). Bookstore commission revenue has declined from approximately $100,000 to $50,000, reflecting reduced enrollment and the availability of less costly mediums that generate lower commission income (used books, online offerings, and book rentals).

The major component of other revenue since 2012 has been rental income. When the College purchased the PEC, it inherited its major tenant, the Phillipsburg School District (“School District”), which was temporarily housed in the PEC pending construction of a new district high school. The School District moved out of the space in February 2017. A new tenant, the NJ Department of Labor, will move into a portion of this vacant space in FY18 after a minor renovation is completed.

Understanding that the rental income would not immediately be available after the departure of the School District, the College began setting aside funds to support the transitional rental income needs in 2015. A total of $430,000 was set aside in the “Phillipsburg Stabilization Fund” to offset the loss of rental income. These funds were intentionally planned to cover any operating losses in the College’s [Revised FY18 Budget/Preliminary FY19 Budget](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\FY18%20Revised%20Budget-FY19%20Prelim.pdf) and in the [Multi-Year Financial Plan.](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Multi-Year%20Financial%20Plan.pdf) Both the budget and the multi-year financial plan have been approved by the Board of Trustees at its February 14, 2018 meeting.

WCCC also receives a small amount of income to offset the cost of its Business Incubator in the PEC. There are currently seven tenants in this facility, plus the County GED program. The College will continue to work with local employers to see if additional rental opportunities can be provided in this facility.

### Operating Expenses

Operating expenses in the College’s budget include most college resources (excluding dedicated grants, capital, restricted student funds, and WCCC Foundation funds). The nearly $9.5 million in expenditures budgeted for FY18 are shown by category in Chart VI-7.

Salaries and benefits comprise 70% of the budget. Maintenance and utilities represent 13% of the budget, while all other expenses (materials, supplies, services, and scholarships) comprise the balance of the budget. Except during the transition of the Phillipsburg Education in 2011 (when start-up expenses increased the maintenance expenses), the percentages allocated among these categories have remained consistent. These categories are discussed in more detail under the multi-year financial plan.

### Allocation of Resources to Support College Strategies

Since 2004, WCCC’s revenue have exceeded expenses at the College. This pattern is not accidental, as the College has planned for the excess revenue to support various one-time or multi-year expenses. Set-aside funds through FY2009 provided $1 million in funding for the Building Addition/Café project. Since that time, the College has spent just under $2 million in one-time funding to support the following initiatives:

* Partial funding of the Library Addition Project
* Matching needs for the Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Program
* Network wiring upgrades
* ADA improvements
* Parking Lot Replacement Project
* Sidewalk Replacement Project
* Installation of emergency call boxes
* Classroom/hallway furnishings
* Upgrade of the ISC
* Faculty furnishings
* Adjunct furnishings/computer upgrades
* Academic special programming (Common Experience)
* Boiler replacement (Washington)
* Pathways Project
* Scholarship support

Funds also are set aside for the following future needs:

* Future operating budget needs
* Phillipsburg Stabilization Fund
* Matching funds for GO Bond Project (Building addition)
* 2019-22 IT proposed equipment refresh
* Roof repair/replacement (Washington and Phillipsburg)
* HVAC and boiler needs (Phillipsburg)
* Campus re-carpeting/furnishings (Washington)
* Drone program start-up
* PTK events and support
* Future pathways and Common Experience events

These are highlighted on [page 8](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Page%208%20from%20Audit.pdf) in the FY17 Audit in the Management Discussion and Analysis section. A summary of [allocations since FY13](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Fund%20Balance%20History.xlsx) is included as well.

### Assets and Liabilities

Chart VI-8 summarizes the most recent statement of net position for WCCC. This statement excludes long-term pension debt for NJ’s Public Employee Pension System (PERS).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart VI-8: Net Position--College Funds Excluding Pension Funds (Rounded $000)** | | | |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Total Assets** | **FY17** | **FY16** | **Change** |
| Current Assets | 5,636 | 5,596 | 40 |
| Capital Assets | 16,518 | 17,486 | (968) |
| Total Assets | 22,154 | 23,081 | (928) |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Less Liabilities:** |  |  |  |
| Current Liabilities | 891 | 1,047 | (156) |
| Non-Current Liabilities (College) | 136 | 136 | 0 |
| Total, Liabilities | 1,027 | 1,183 | (156) |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Net Position** | **21,127** | **21,899** | **(772)** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Net Position (Excluding Pension)** |  |  |  |
| Investment in Capital | 16,518 | 17,486 | (968) |
| Restricted | 26 | 25 | 1 |
| Unrestricted-Designated | 3,522 | 3,322 | 201 |
| Unrestricted-Undesignated | 1,061 | 1,066 | (6) |
| **Total Net Position** | **21,127** | **21,899** | **(772)** |

Interpreting WCCC’s financial statements can be challenging because the College (and all public NJ agencies) must record the underfunding of the State’s Public Employee Pension System (PERS) debt on its financial statements in accordance with GASB financial requirements. NJ’s pension system is one of the most underfunded systems in the nation. The Department of Treasury annually calculates the PERS liability for all public entities. WCCC was apportioned $6.9 million of the State’s total liability to WCCC for purposes of audit display in 2017 (although the College has no responsibility for this liability). This causes the College’s (and all public higher education institutions) to show a loss in unrestricted funds on the balance sheet. The data in Chart VI-8 is a more accurate depiction of WCCC’s financial condition. These figures do not include the $1.1 million in assets held by the Warren County Community College Foundation.

The College’s responsibility for pension expenses rests with paying the employer share of the annual current employees. Net pension expenses total approximately $220,000 annually, and these costs are included as part of the annual budget.

### Multi-Year Financial Plan

In February 2018, the Board of Trustees approved a [Multi-Year Financial Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Multi-Year%20Financial%20Plan.pdf) through FY22. This plan is summarized in Chart VI-9



Highlights of the plan include:

* **Enrollment Projections**

Like a vast majority of community colleges in the nation, WCCC has experienced enrollment reductions over the past five years, as discussed in a previous section. For FY19 and FY20, the College is assuming a 1% enrolment increase in FY19, level enrollment in FY20, with a projection of a two percent decline from current levels in FY21 and FY22. These assumptions are very conservative and based on the following:

* The enrollment of the five key feeder high schools will have a 7% increase in graduating class enrollments in 2018, which will result in increased enrollment in FY2019. This trend will begin a reversal in 2020;
* The intentional and strategically planned academic changes that the College put in place in 2015 and 2016 should no longer have a significant impact on enrollment by the 2018-19 academic year;
* Summer Pell Grants will help to expand summer enrollment beginning in FY19. Currently, very few financial aid students are able to attend in the summer as state and federal financial aid is normally not available. The College anticipates an increase in enrollment in its Summer A courses because of the new Summer Pell grant.
* **Tuition and Fee Charges**

WCCC has been incrementally increasing its tuition and fee rate between 3-4%. This plan assumes the same pattern with annual increases of about 3.5% and (equivalent to a dollar increase of $5.50 to $6.00 per credit.

* **Government Funding**

The state appropriation for community colleges has not increased in over a decade. Despite the inauguration of a new Democratic governor who has pledged support for free community college, the plan very conservatively assumes level funding at the actual FY18 level and beyond.

The county appropriation has increased by over 2% over the last two years. For FY18, the College is also requesting a special appropriation to support a new addiction counseling program (corresponding expenses also are built in the budget). Thereafter, the college is assuming a 2% annual increase (the county funding cap) during this period.

This is a funding level similar to what the Warren County Vo-Tech has received (the other Warren County-funded educational organization).

* **Continuing Education Revenues**

Continuing Education revenues assume an incremental increase in net revenues, beginning in FY19, reflecting new initiatives, including the assumption of the County GED program and a new drone initiative.

* **Other Income**

The plan assumes that after FY18, rental income will increase based on current lease agreements. Until FY17, the College brought approximately $500,000 in other income from a variety of sources, primarily rental income, facility rental, testing, investment and bookstore income.

**Phillipsburg Stabilization Fund**

During the 2012-13 academic year, the College set aside fund to temporarily cover the loss of revenue when the Phillipsburg Board Education (PBOE) moved out of the PEC. The reserve fund set aside ($430,000) represents a full year of rental income when the PBOE was renting space for the Alternative Middle School and Superintendent’s Office were located in the PEC... Although the PBOE moved out of the PEC in early 2017, the College did not need to draw down any Stabilization funds in FY2017. The FY18 budget calls for the allocation of $250,000 Stabilization funds to offset the temporary income loss. The financial plan does not build additional drawdown of these funds for the FY19-FY22 period. However, should there be additional shortfall, the balance of Stabilization funds could be designated to support operating needs.

* **Expenditure Projections**

**Salaries** are projected to increase by 2% annually for full-time employees. This is a bit higher than the recent experience, where the College provided lower increases to higher salaried employees. The projections also do not assume any savings from position turnover, so it is likely that expenses will actually be lower than budgeted. Positions budgeted in FY18 and FY19 reflect the retirements and the anticipated back filling of several of these positions.

**Fringe benefits** are projected to increase by 9% in FY19, 5% in FY20, annually and thereafter 2.5% and 2.0%. This category includes health benefits, FICA, dental, tuition reimbursement, and miscellaneous benefit expenses. Although health benefit premiums have increased at a higher rate over the past two several years, employee co-pays, along with employee turnover savings, have resulted in a lower increase in overall benefit costs.

There is also a possibility that benefits may be restructured under a new governor (leading community colleges to be part of the lower cost State Health Benefits Plan rather than the State Education Health Benefits plan). It is also likely that any lingering Affordable Health Care rules regarding excessive insurance payments may necessitate a restructuring of the state benefits plan. For these reasons, WCCC is comfortable with assuming an overall 3% increase in total benefit costs.

**Non-salary expenses** are projected to increase slightly in FY19 and thereafter remain level over the next several years. This mirrors the trends that have been experienced over the past five years, with some non-salary expenses actually decreasing. More efficient contracts (cleaning, security, landscaping, and photocopiers) have resulted in savings. Postage expenses are projected to decline along with certain printing costs as more activity is done electronically.

Non-salary funds are also set aside for any new programs in FY19, which going forward, would be supported through Perkins grant funds. .

Most major **technology expenses** over the period will be covered through reserve funds set aside to support the Technology Plan (servers, desktops, laptops, and a new telephone system and firewall). Annual expenses, primarily for software, contracted IT services and VM ware will continue to be supported through the operating budget.

**Utility expenses** are projected to have significant annual cost increases when the Building Annex is completed. Utilities and expected to be increased by 10% during the first full year of operation; thereafter WCCC is projecting level expenses for utilities. During summer 2018, the College will undertake a major HVAC project in the PEC to replace a 50 year old boiler (funds for this project are budgeted under the capital fund). WCCC is assuming to replace older equipment with more energy efficient equipment, which will help reduce expenses. In addition, repairs/upgrades done with the Washington HVAC system (due to a directly lightning strike) has led to some utility savings as newer equipment was replaced with insurance funds. Finally, WCCC participates in several purchasing consortiums, which have achieved significant savings (particularly for electric). All of these factors allow the College to feel confident with the multi-year utility projections.

**Maintenance**: Similar to utilities, the College is anticipating higher maintenance costs with the opening of the Building Annex. An increase of 10% is projected for FY20. Thereafter, the plan estimated that the College will need an additional 3% and 2% increase in maintenance during FY21 and FY22, respectively. The operating category covers small capital projects. Anything significant is paid for out of funds designated for renewal and replacement activities in the Capital budget.

**Contingency Funds**: WCCC annually sets aside contingency funds to support unplanned financial needs. The budgets from FY18 through FY22 have $125,000 annually set aside for unplanned projects or special needs.

### Technology Resources

WCCC has outsourced its network management since 2004. The current contractor is ERGOS Technology, which acquired the College’s previous technology provider, AIO Solutions, in 2015. There are three ERGOS staff members on-site and additional staffing available in NJ and at the ERGOS headquarters in Texas as needed. The senior ERGOS on-site employee has worked on the WCCC campus since 2007. ERGOS is responsible for all systems and all software (with the exception of the Jenzabar EX software, which is managed by a WCCC staff member), networking, website management, virus protection, disaster recovery, help desk management, and the procurement of software and hardware to support campus needs. Files are backed-up both on-site and at the ERGOS headquarters in Texas.

WCCC has seven computer labs in Washington (including a MAC lab), two labs in Phillipsburg, plus extensive computing resources in the Library and the ISC. All Washington classrooms have projectors or smartboards in them. There are loaner laptops in the ISC, the Nursing Lab, and at the PEC. Computer labs are equipped with Impero software, which allows faculty to push information to students electronically and monitor computer activities in the classroom. All full-time employees have either laptop or desktop devices. Faculty may have a desktop in their office and/or use a laptop. There are laptops and desktops available for adjuncts in the adjunct offices.

All employees and students have access to My Warren (the College’s integrated LMS and Intranet) as well as webmail accounts. Various training is provided to assist students and faculty with using computer resources.

Technology is replaced on a three/four year schedule for labs and employee equipment and a five-year schedule for server room hardware. Thin Clients and Smartboards equipment are on a longer cycle of replacement, along with projectors, although backup equipment is maintained in case of equipment failure. Printers are covered under a maintenance repair and replacement contract; most printing is now done through photocopiers in Washington and the PEC. The College will begin another cycle of computer lab upgrades in summer 2018. Sufficient funds have been set aside at this time to fund the first three years of the five-year replacement plan.

### 

### Financial Procedures

As a public two-year college in NJ, WCCC is bound by both community college laws and also local government spending requirements. The Board has set up a series of [financial policies](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Financial%20Policies.docx) to help guide the College. To help employees understand various statutes and College requirements, WCCC has a [financial procedures manual](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%206%20Links\Financial%20Procedures%20Manual.pdf). This manual is posted on My Warren under the purchasing tab.

Budget managers and their staff have electronic access to the general ledger system for their departments through My Warren. Current and three prior year transaction data are available electronically. Purchase requisitions are entered by the employees electronically and routed for approval in accordance with the College’s spending thresholds. College forms are available to all WCCC employees on My Warren under the Basic Info tab.

## Summary

WCCC has demonstrated that it has a dynamic, systemic and integrated planning processes in place to support the current and future direction of the College. There are mechanisms in place to measure and report progress on initiatives. Although WCCC is mid-way through its current plan, it has a number of outcomes to indicate that the plans help direct the operations of the College. Other multi-year plans are in place to guide the direction of facilities expansion and renewal, enrollment, and technology.

Despite enrollment challenges, the College’s financial position remains strong. WCCC has been conservative in past spending and has set-aside adequate funding to ensure that it is not in fiscal difficulties in the near future. Because WCCC intentionally has kept its staffing lean, it has not had to resort to a reduction in force, as other institutions have had to enact, during the past five years.

WCCC has maintained technology resources and has plans in place to upgrade current technology resources. The College has been conservative in increasing its physical facilities, but that has enabled WCCC to support the renewal and replacement of current facilities.

## Institutional Opportunities

* WCCC should update the financial projections in its facilities renewal and replacement plan to identify and prioritize projects to be completed over the next five to 10 years.
* WCCC should consider enhancements to its camera security system and the replacement of its telephone system.

# Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

*The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.*

## Requirements of Affiliation

This chapter addresses the following Requirements of Affiliation:

#12 The institution fully discloses its legally constituted governance structure(s) including any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership). The institution’s governing body is responsible for the quality and integrity.

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

## Overview

Warren County Community College is governed by an 11-member Board of Trustees, which oversees the College. The Board has a comprehensive series of policies to oversee the College and ensure that it is undertaking its fiduciary responsibilities. The College is guided by a seasoned leadership team that possesses the appropriate educational and experiential qualifications.

## Discussion and Analysis

### WCCC Board of Trustees

* **Appointment Process**

By statute [(18A:64A-8)](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Community%20College%20Statutes%20PDF.pdf), Warren County Community College is overseen by a 12-member Board of Trustees. This is also clarified in [Policy 102.3](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.3.docx) -College Trustees. Its representatives include eight members appointed by the County Board of Chosen Freeholders (“Freeholders”), two members appointed by the NJ Governor’s Office, the County Superintendent of Schools[[27]](#footnote-27), and one Alumni Trustee (a non-voting member elected by the graduating student body who serves a one-year term). The President serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the board. All appointed trustees serve for a term of four years (or until a replacement is appointed). The Freeholder trustee appointments are staggered so that each year two trustee positions are up for appointment.

The Freeholder appointees are selected through a process that begins with a public advertisement for trustee members. By NJ Statute, a trustee must be Warren County citizens for at least four years and not be a current elected official or an employee of the College or county. Applicants are interviewed by the Warren County Community College Trustee Selection Committee, which makes recommendations to the Freeholders. The Freeholder appointments are made via a public meeting of the body. The gubernatorial appointments are made through the Governor’s Office. The College does not have an official responsibility in the appointment process but does provide input to the Freeholder Trustee Selection Committee in accordance with the Succession Plan.

* **Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees**

The Board’s role and responsibilities are set forth in NJ Statute 18A:3B-6 (all public college boards) and 18A:64A-12 (responsibilities for community college boards). These include the appointment of a President, fiscal oversight, approval of tuition and fees, preparation of an annual audit, oversight of strategic planning, approval of hiring (upon the recommendation of the President), final tenure decisions, appointment of legal counsel, and approval of expenses above bid thresholds. [Policy 102.5](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.5.docx)-Functions, Powers and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees further clarifies the role of the Board of Trustees. It indicates that the Board acts as a whole and delineates the lines of communication between the Board and College staff. Board members are subject to [Policy 102.4](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.4.docx)-Code of Ethics for College Trustees. Additionally, the WCCC Board has developed a Board member Job Description and a Succession Plan. This plan will be made available to the Team during the visit.

* **Board Orientation**

[Policy 102.3.1](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.3.1.docx)-Board Orientation calls for an initial Board Orientation session for new Board members, with a follow-up session within the next six months. For many years the orientation was just one session; however, it became clear that there was too much material to digest in one session. The new Board Orientation model allows new members to receive an overview at the first session, with a follow-up on more extensive financial and operational details in the second session. The second session allows new Board members to address any emergent questions. Participants include the Board Chair, President, and Vice President of Finance and Operations (in the second session). The [Agendas](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\New%20Trustee%20Orientation%20Agendas.docx) for these sessions includes a review of the Board structure, the Board Policy Manual, the Strategic Plan, and various financial documents. Student Trustees have an abbreviated session with the Board Chair and the President.

* **Board Structure and Governance**

Governance practices are spelled out in [Policy 102.11](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.11.docx)-Board Committee Structure and Purpose. The election of Board officers occurs at the November annual reorganization committee meeting in accordance with [Policy 102.7](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.7.docx)-Officers of the College Board. Officers may serve in their role for up to four consecutive years. The responsibilities of Board officers are spelled out in [Policy 102.8](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.8.docx)-Duties of Officers. The procedures for the Board meetings are prescribed in [Policies 102.13 through 102.18](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.13-102.18.docx), which specify the policies and procedures of the Board meetings and ensure that the Board follows all NJ open public meeting laws.

[Policy 102.11](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.11.docx)-Board Committee Structure and Purpose, establishes the committee structure of the Board of Trustees and committee responsibilities. There are three standing committees: Policy and Planning, Operations, and Finance and Audit. There is also the Executive Committee of the Board, consisting of Board officers. In addition, there have been ad hoc committees of the Board, For example, the Facilities Committee has been convened when WCCC is undertaking construction projects. The Board Chair assigns members to Board committees during the reorganization meeting in November.

The work of the Board is largely done through the standing Board committees. The College e-mails and mails Board committee packets no later than 12 days prior to the Board meeting. Committees discuss and deliberate the materials via conference call 7 days prior to the Board meeting, focusing on their committee agenda, but also discussing any issues from other committees. The Board Chair normally participates in all committee meetings. Items that are approved are placed on a Consent Agenda for the next Board meeting. Any additional materials (Board agenda, minutes, changes/updates) are e-mailed and mailed to the Board normally six days before the Board meeting. Committee and Board materials are also posted in the Board of Trustees group on My Warren. In addition to ad hoc items, the Board has an [annual calendar of activities](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Annual%20Board%20Calendar%20of%20Actions.docx) that details items to be covered at various meetings.

The Policy Committee handles the development, review, revision, and rescission of Board Policies, along with academic issues of the College. This committee also is the liaison committee for the Middle States process. In accordance with the procedures outlined in [Policy 103](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\103.docx) Policy Development and Approval Process, all policies go through two readings. Policies are reviewed and updated continuously. Audit and financial matters of the College are handled through the Board’s Committee on Finance and Audit. This committee reviews the monthly financial statements and meet annually with the College’s Auditors to review the annual audit. The Finance Committee reviews the annual budget as well as any changes in the tuition and fee rates for the College. Personnel recommendations, contracts, and approvals for waiver of bidding requirements (“bid waivers”) are approved the by Board’s Committee on Operations.

* **2018 Board Membership**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chart VII- Board of Trustee Membership** | | | |
| **Board Member** | **Office** | **Appointed By** | **Committee** |
| Dr. Phil Linfante | Chair | Freeholders | Ex-officio, all |
| Dr. Frank Gilly | Vice Chair | Freeholders | Chair, Finance |
| Mrs. Betti Singh | Secretary | Freeholders | Chair, Policy |
| Mr. Peter Schmidt | Treasurer | Freeholders | Finance |
| Hon. Craig Dana | Member | Freeholders | Operations |
| Hon. Garabed Haytaian | Member (new) | Governor | Policy |
| Mr. Alan Lowcher | Member | Freeholders | Chair, Operations |
| Ms. Maria Maier | Member | Freeholders | Policy |
| Ms. Yvonne Reitemeyer | Member (new) | Governor | Finance |
| Mr. James Crouse\* | Alumni Trustee | Students | Policy |
|  |  |  |  |
| Dr. William Austin\* | President | Ex-Officio |  |

\*Non-voting members.

Please see [College Trustee Membership](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Board%20of%20Trustee%20Membership.pdf) for information on trustees over the past three years.

WCCC Board members are active members of the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT).Of special note is that the former Board Chair, Mr. Peter Schmidt, was the 2015 ACCT Regional Trustee Leadership Award Recipient, Northeast Region. Mrs. Betti Singh is an ACCT Lifetime Member and was the 2015 ACCT NJ State Coordinator for the Northeast Region.

* **Board Professional Development**

Professional development for trustees is encouraged to ensure that trustees are knowledgeable about higher education and community college matters. [Policy 102.20](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.20.docx)-Trustee Professional Development provides the framework for trustee professional development and travel. Board members and the President have done a number of presentations during annual ACCT conferences. Recent presentations include:

* Presidential Contracts. Pre-Congress Session presented at the 2017 ACCT Annual Congress, Las Vegas, NV.
* Building stronger CEO-Board relationships. Pre-Congress Academy presented at the 2017 ACCT Annual Congress, Las Vegas, NV.
* Developing a cohesive and effective board. Session presented with ACCT staff at the 2017 ACCT Annual Congress, Las Vegas, NV.
* Michigan and NJ Are Moving the Needle on Student Success - And Trustees Are Playing a Key Role in These Statewide Efforts (2017 ACCT Annual Congress, Las Vegas, NV)
* Responding to a Faculty Vote of "No Confidence," the Courage & Conviction of Trustee Stewardship (2017 ACCT Annual Congress, Las Vegas, NV)
* Make the Diploma Matter: Why Remedial Reforms & Pathways Aren't Enough to Improve Graduation Rates (2017 ACCT Annual Congress, Las Vegas, NV)
* Cost Effective Community Engagement and Empowerment through Great Literature (2016 ACCT Annual Congress, New Orleans, LA)
* Improve Board Leadership through Board Retreats (2016 ACCT Annual Congress, New Orleans, LA)
* Teaching Administrators, the 21st Century Model (2015 ACCT Annual Congress, San Diego, CA)
* Predicted to Fail: What if our Placement Strategy is Wrong? (2014 ACCT Annual Congress, Chicago, IL)
* Colleges Serving Veterans through Unique Programs and Partnerships (2013 ACCT Annual Congress, Seattle, WA)

All Board members take part in at least one annual retreat to focus on both professional development and Board priorities. The [agendas](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Board%20Retreat%20Agendas.pdf) for these meetings indicate that these retreats evidence both speakers (including Wayne Newton from ACCT) and varied Board exercises (including the visioning session for the Strategic Plan). The sessions have led to new policy directions for the campus. For example, after the Board members took the ACCUPLACER test and engaged in training from Complete College America. Here Board members experienced what students faced, and suggested a reexamination of placement strategies for remedial classes. This, in turn, led to the development of the [Guided Pathways](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Pathways%20Initiatives%20for%20Middle%20States.docx) initiative, as discussed under Standard V. A presentation on the Complete College America led to a discussion, and ultimately a Board policy, to reduce the number of credits to graduation. Mr. Newton’s session led to the re-examination/revision of several Board of Trustee policies in Chapter 1 of the Policy Manual, and the addition of a Board Chair evaluation as part of the Board’s annual self-evaluation.

* **Board Self-Evaluation**

In accordance with [Policy 102.5.1](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.5.docx)-Board Self Evaluation, the Board undertakes an annual self-evaluation process. The current [Board Self-Evaluation Instrument](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Board%20Self-Evaluation%20Instrument.pdf) focuses on both the Board member’s view of the Board as a whole and their individual strengths as Board members. The Board has used varying self-evaluation instruments over the years. The Board self-evaluation is very important because it helps the Board to focus on areas where additional professional development may be needed and where the President needs to focus over the coming year. For example, one outcome of the 2015 self-evaluation was the Board’s desire to focus on additional pathways to success. The 2016 self-evaluation led to a revision of the policy on Board orientation, which called for a refresher session for current trustees. The 2017 evaluation process also included a [Board Chair Evaluation.](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Board%20Chair%20Evaluation%20Instrument.pdf)

The Board self-evaluation process not only renews the focus of the Board on its primary responsibility, but also focuses on its relationship with the President. For example, the 2013 Board self-evaluation led to a presentation and discussion at the [March 2013 Board Retreat](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Board%20Retreat%202013.pdf) how the Board of Trustees could become a model “best practices” as a working Board. This, in turn, has resulted in WCCC Board of Trustees members becoming invited annual presenters at ACCT conferences and pre-conference workshops. WCCC is recognized as the “go to” model Board by ACCT professional staff members. The WCCC president is often called upon to facilitate Board Retreats for other community colleges.

### WCCC Foundation

The WCCC Foundation was created in 1982 as a non-profit organization to support the activities of the College. The [Foundation’s By-Laws](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\WCCC%20Foundation%20By-Laws.doc), which were last revised in 2011, establish the rules and regulations of the WCCC Foundation similar to the Chapter 1 Policy Manual for the Board of Trustees. The WCCC Foundation’s membership as of July 1, 2017 consists of 17 members, including four officers. Members are nominated through the Foundation and approved by the College’s Board of Trustees.

The Foundation hosts various fundraisers throughout the year, primarily to raise funds for scholarship support. In most years there is a golf outing in the summer and a Comedy Night in early spring. In the fall, the Foundation sponsors the Warren County Hall of Fame, the proceeds of which benefit the WCCC Foundation. This event began in 2010. As of 2017, there have been 44 inductees, representing leaders and honored citizens throughout Warren County.

The Foundation’s total assets as of June 30, 2016 were $1,077,000. The Foundation, by its mission and state limitations on community colleges, is limited to providing scholarships and funds to support the mission of Warren County Community College.[[28]](#footnote-28) The Foundation’s annual expenses in FY16 were $114,000.

### Board/College Policies

The operations of the College are guided by the Board of Trustees Policy Manual. The Policy Manual is posted online at <http://www.warren.edu/college-policies/> with links also in My Warren. The Policy Manual focuses on six main areas:

Chapter 1 Organizational Policies

Chapter 2 Personnel Policies

Chapter 3 Student Services Policies

Chapter 4 Academic Services Policies

Chapter 5 Finance and Administration Policies  
Chapter 6 Public Relations Policies

Policies are reviewed and revised continuously by the Board of Trustee. Since 2013, most policies have been developed, updated, deleted, or reaffirmed by the Board of Trustees. The College staff periodically undertake a comprehensive review of Policy Manual and set a policy review schedule for the Board of Trustees. The most recent [Policy Review Schedule](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Policy%20Review%20Schedule.docx) was adopted in February 2017. The prior review was undertaken in March 2014. However, changes at the federal and state level also prompt the development, revision or rescission of various policies (e.g., Title IX-related policies).

### Chief Executive

A key function of the Board of Trustees is the selection and evaluation of the College President. The appointment process for President is set forth in [Policy 102.6.2](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.6.2.docx)-Presidential Search Process. This policy was last used to select President Austin in November 2003 and was reaffirmed in November 2017.

President Austin, the College’s third president, has served in his role for fifteen years. His most recent [vitae](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Dr.%20William%20Austin%20Resume_CV%20as%20of%20Jan%202018.pdf) indicates his qualifications, scholarship, and professional development both before and since his appointment as WCCC President. Dr. Austin has received numerous state and regional honors, including the 2017 “Executive of the Year” for the Northeast Region of the ACCT. As noted on the vitae, Dr. Austin not only participates in extensive professional development, but also is a member of the ACCC Board of Directors and made numerous presentations at the national level, particularly at ACCT and AACC conferences. He served on the AACC Presidents’ Academy Executive Committee from 2012-2017, chairing the national organization in 2015-2016. He currently is Chair of the AACC Commission on Workforce Development and an active organizer in the AACC annual conference.

President Austin serves on the national Board of Directors of the American Association of University Administrators and was awarded the American Association of University Administrators McInnis/Ryan Award for Mid-Career Higher Education Leadership in 2016 prior to being invited to join that Board. During 2016-17, he served as chair of the NJ Community College Presidents association. Recently he was invited to serve as a member of the International Advisory Board of the “Chair Academy.”

The president is formally evaluated by the Board of Trustees annually in accordance with [Policy 102.6](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\102.6.docx) -Evaluation of the President. As part of this evaluation, the President provides the Board with an update on the progress towards annual goals at a public board meeting. The [2014-2017 Presidential Priorities](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Presidential%20Priorities%20%20(2014-2017).pdf), which were first introduced in during the summer of 2014 presidential evaluation, highlighted the areas that were to be focused on in the new Strategic Plan. These were later refined in the Strategic Plan 2020 document.

### College Administration

Warren County Community College has a level complement of approximately 60-65 full-time staff positions for the last 14 years. However, the allocation of positions to various departments and functions has changed during this period. Over the past decade, positions have been reallocated from strictly administrative responsibilities to teaching and administrative positions. In 2004, there were 16 faculty positions. During fall 2017, there are 20 faculty and 4 teaching administrators. In addition, five college administrators currently teach or have recently taught classes.

As noted in the [Organizational Chart](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\Organization%20Chart%201-16-18.pdf), the senior administration consists of three vice presidents, three deans, and four directors. All deans and vice presidents have at least a decade of experience at Warren County Community College. The Vice President of Finance and Operations has over 36 years of higher education experience and, as of 2018, serves as a Middle States Commissioner. The Vice President of Continuing Education has worked in the field for 21years; the Vice President of Student Services has 16 years of collegiate experience; and the Acting Vice President of Academic Affairs has 21 years of experience at the collegiate level. All deans are master’s prepared and have years of expertise at WCCC. The summary of the academic qualifications of all full-time employees is included starting on page 119 in the [College Catalog](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\2017-18%20College%20Catalog.pdf).

All full-time staff and permanent part-time employees undergo an annual performance evaluation. The [Performance Evaluation Instrument](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Employee%20Performance%20Appraisal.docx) was revised in 2012 and 2017. In addition to the performance evaluation, staff members also complete an annual [Personal Plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Personal%20Planning%20Template.docx). The Personal Plan document provides a prospective view of the areas where the employee will focus on in the upcoming year. Employees review their evaluation and personal plan with their direct supervisor and with their vice president. All employees also schedule an annual meeting with the President to review both documents. As part of the evaluation process, employees must demonstrate how they are meeting various goals in the [Departmental plan](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\Department%20Plan%20Template.docx). As discussed in Standard 6, each department prepares a department plan that focuses on strategic initiatives, as well as the annual needs of a department.

Employees have participated in a number of professional development activities. Senior employees also participate in various statewide “affinity groups.” These groups meet either monthly or quarterly to discuss issues in their areas. WCCC administrators have served in leadership capacities on affinity groups (including Student Services, Business Officers, and Human Resources/Negotiators). Employees are members of various “listservs” that allow for communication between state and national professionals in their fields. All employees are eligible for tuition reimbursement in accordance with [Policy 201.10](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\201.10.docx)–Tuition Reimbursement. Currently, five employees are pursuing doctorates, two are pursuing master’s degrees and seven have earned master’s degrees. Four current employees have earned associate degrees conferred by WCCC through the College’s tuition waiver program ([Policy 202.11](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%207%20Links\202.11.docx)).

### College Employees

WCCC full-time employee complement has been a very consistent at 60 to 65 full-time employees over the past 15 years. The composition of staffing has changed from 2004 to indicate the reallocation of staff from purely administrative functions to faculty or teaching administrators. Unlike virtually every other community college in the state, WCCC did not significantly expand its staffing component during the “boom years” of 2009-2011. As a result, WCCC is one of few NJ institutions that has not been subject to staffing layoffs or staffing reductions in its full-time workforce because of enrollment declines. This has led to continuity at the College, although there have been individual reallocation of personnel in administrative areas to new functions or the reallocation of new duties among offices. The flexibility and the willingness of WCCC employees to assume new or different responsibilities has enabled the College to adapt to new challenges. All vice presidents at the College have previously served in multiple different roles on the campus.

Because of its size, WCCC outsources a number of functions that are often handled by college employees on other campuses. These include:

* IT Network Management and Disaster Recovery
* Contracted Security Guards
* Building Trades (Plumbing, HVAC, General Maintenance)
* Landscaping
* Snow Removal
* Archiving/File Storage
* Construction Management

WCCC has been very successful in bidding out many of the above services, at times using creative contract structures. For example, the College bids out a multi-year flat rate snow removal contract. In years where there is little snow, the College has essentially paid for “snow insurance.” However, during heavy snow or multiple icing storms, the College has the benefit of not worrying about unanticipated costs in the budget. This model has been adopted by the Warren County Vo-Tech, which now uses the same contractor for these services.

### Employee Policies and Procedures and Evaluation

All employees are covered by a comprehensive series of policies and procedures as noted in [Chapter II](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%202%20Links\CHAPTER%20II.docx) of the Board Policy Manual. The policies cover an extensive series of employee protections, as well as various employee requirements. The policy manual, which is updated as policies are amended by the Board of Trustees, is available online under [College Policies](http://www.warren.edu/college-policies/). Hard copies of the manual also are distributed annually to faculty and staff.

The full-time faculty are covered by the [2015-19 Faculty Contract.](file:///C:\Users\pratt\AppData\Local\Standard%207%20Links\Faculty%20Contract%202015-2019.pdf) The College and the faculty recently concluded a nearly two-year negotiation process for this agreement. Any issues not covered by this contract are addressed through the Board policies.

### Campus Governance

Campus Governance includes a series of college committees. In addition to senior administrative staff, the College has a committee governance system (Enterprise Leadership Team -- ELT) which represents senior staff as well as the chairs of each of the committees shown on the next page in Figure VII-1.

The ELT meets monthly during the academic year to report on the activities of each of the committees and to provide a roundtable discussion of issues affecting the campus. The intent of the ELT was to have members report back to their colleagues on the activities on campus; however, this communication is not always occurring. The administration has created, and will continue to expand, online information for the community in My Warren.

As a small college, many employees wear many “hats.” There can be an uneven distribution of work among committees and clubs. All faculty are required by contract to participate in one committee.

But some committees require a much higher workload (for example, the workload is significantly higher for those in the C & I Committee and those undertaking program review vs. those on the Safety Committee). While the College has attempted to rotate faculty committee duties, it may be time to examine the entire committee structure.

**Figure VII-1**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Enterprise Leadership Team** |  | Curriculum and Instruction Committee | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Assessment Committee | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Professional Development Committee | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Outcomes Assessment/Program Review | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Faculty/Staff Forum | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Teaching, Learning, Technology Roundtable | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Safety Committee | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Institutional Research Board | | | |

### Succession Planning

Given the relatively small staffing of WCCC, succession planning is very important. The Board of Trustees has maintained and updated a comprehensive Succession Plan for the Board of Trustees, the President, and Senior Executive staff since 2010. The most recent plan, which was updated in 2016 and approved in March 2017 after the yearlong review, is intended to ensure continued services. Because of the confidential nature of this plan, the plan will be made available to the Team during the visit.

### Information Systems to Support College Activities

Beginning in 2013, the College began the transition to a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, Jenzabar EX. Prior to that time, the College had been using Jenzabar’s legacy Teams Elite (TE) system that was a mainframe non-windows system. Jenzabar EX was selected because it was a natural upgrade from the TE software in terms of architecture and the annual licensing costs were reasonable for the College. Also in 2013, the College applied for a grant through the NJ Higher Education Technology Infrastructure (HETI) program. The College received a HETI grant to cover half of the cost of the ERP system implementation.

The College implemented the new Jenzabar system in June 2015. The new system provides enhanced online services for students and employees. The online portal, known as My Warren, provides students with application, registration, accounts receivable (payment, estimated financial aid information), scheduling information, grading, unofficial transcript information, advising, a GPA calculator, orientation and, most importantly, the LMS system (eLearning). ELearning is completely integrated with the ERP system, so registration, enrollment, and grades are integrated between the online portal and the ERP system. Students can also check their class schedule, estimated and applied financial aid, student accounts, transcript, and degree progress information through My Warren. My Warren provides faculty with roster, course information, attendance, and grade entry capabilities.

In addition to instructional information, the online system also enables the College to set up basic information (such as e-Learning tutorials, Student Orientation, and Information Literacy) for students. The portal also allows the College to establish Campus Groups for clubs, organization and, especially, campus committees. This allows various campus groups to communicate among their members and enables the College to create document repositories for various committees and task forces. There are several key campus groups, including the Board of Trustees, the Curriculum and Instruction Committee, the Assessment Committee, and Middle States.

The updated ERP system also has provided the College with the ability to do more comprehensive report writing and query of the academic, finance, and student information data. As part of the implementation process, the College also has received report-writing training and is able to better prepare various federal and state reports, as well as data to assist the College in assessing admissions, registration, enrollment, retention, and graduation data.

## Summary

WCCC has extensive Board policies to address the operations of the Board of Trustees that are reviewed and updated on a frequent basis. New trustee orientation ensures that new Board members understand their role and obligation as a member of the Board of Trustees. Board members routinely receive professional development and engage in self-evaluation to assist them in their role as stewards of the College. WCCC Board members and the President have been nationally recognized by the ACCT for their roles in providing leadership in the community college sector and are frequent presenters at ACCT conferences.

The President and senior staff are well credentialed for their positions and have significant experience at WCCC. The President has been a frequent presenter at national conferences and has served in prominent national and statewide roles. There is a transition plan in place in the case of staffing turnover.

## Institutional Opportunity

* The College should consider the effectiveness of its current faculty/staff committee structure and seek to balance workload, student club and committee needs more equitably among faculty and staff.

# Conclusion

Warren County Community College has spent the past two years analyzing various data to review its progress in addressing not only the Middle States standards, but also, more importantly, the Strategic Plan. The last several years have resulted in significant changes in academic programs and offerings, with the intent of enhancing services to students. WCCC is proud that it has been able to use its limited resources to support what it considers the highest priority needs for its community.

There is additional work to do. The College has identified the following Institutional Opportunities as areas worthy of addressing in the future:

**Standard I**

* As the College develops its next Strategic Plan, it should renew its Mission Statement to ensure that it is congruent with any emerging community and higher education needs.

**Standard II**

* As part of its implementation of the next Technology Master Plan, the College should redesign its website with a focus on accessibility, increased standardization of content material and improved transparency.

**Standard III**

* The College should enhance the ongoing assessment of its growing dual enrollment program using the latest NACEP best practices and standards.
* It is important that a college’s information literacy efforts and training focus on careful evaluation of sources in the age of internet searching. WCCC should consider creating an information literacy review team of faculty and the Library Coordinator to ensure that the use of source material is covered uniformly across the General Education curriculum.
* As WCCC implements its new Academic Learning Lab in the College Annex, it should ensure that appropriate software and services are available in this center to complement current tutoring activities.

**Standard IV**

* WCCC should encourage the broader use of technology by faculty for the reporting of student attendance and progress more regularly to determine those who appear “at risk.”
* WCCC should consider new approaches to student success initiatives, including ways to encourage positive Student Services-student interactions.
* Based on these initiatives, the College should focus on recruiting, retaining and graduating additional EOF students.

**Standard V**

* WCCC should evaluate the effectiveness of changes that have been implemented by the Assessment Committee and make additional modifications as necessary.
* As part of a renewed program review process, WCCC should re-examine the use of pre and post testing and determine if other more robust option(s) may be more meaningful for the assessment of student learning.

**Standard VI**

* WCCC should update the financial projections in its facilities renewal and replacement plan to identify and prioritize projects to be completed over the next five to 10 years.
* WCCC should consider enhancements to its College security camera system and replacement of its telephone system.

**Standard VII**

* The College should consider the effectiveness of its current faculty/staff committee structure and seek to balance workload, student club and committee needs more equitably among faculty and staff.



1. Although Warren County has a relatively mountainous terrain, there are two major highways (Routes 78 and 80) that run through the region, enabling residents to commute to either eastern NEW JERSEY/NYC or the Lehigh Valley in PA for employment [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The position of County Superintendent has been regionalized to cover multiple counties. The current Superintendent has elected not to serve on the WCCC Board due to other commitments and her confidence in the strength of the WCCC Board. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Three degree programs (Graphic and Web Design, Early Childhood Education and Ecotourism are not accepting new students at this time.) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Multi-year strategic plans were previously adopted in 2004 and 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The net assets reflect a long-term NEW JERSEY Pension liability of $6.9, which the College must reflect on its balance sheet per, GASB requirements. Excluding pension debt, the College’s net assets were $21.1 million and its unrestricted and designated assets were $4.6 million in FY17. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. In fall 2016, 98% of the students served by the College were Warren County residents. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The college annually hosts in-service session in fall (normally Columbus Day) and spring (normally President’s Day). These are training sessions for all faculty and staff. Adjunct faculty are voluntarily asked to participate. The sessions focus on a variety of activities, from mandated trainings to informational sessions. See [Recent In-Service Agendas](file:///E:\Final%20Report\Standard%201%20Links\In-Service%20Sessions.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Three degree programs (Graphic and Web Design, Early Childhood Education and Ecotourism are not accepting new students at this time.) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Because of the New Jersey general education requirements, a student may opt to choose science/mathematics and technology electives that result in 62 credits. However, WCCC has redesigned its computer applications course (CS C102) down to two credits so that students can meet this general education component in 12 credits to enable students to complete programs in 60 credits. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The New Jersey President’s Council includes presidents from all licensed New Jersey colleges and universities. It is the statutory body charged with program approval. Programs beyond the mission of a college (example, a community college offering a baccalaureate degree) also requires approval of the Secretary of Higher Education. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. In 2015, Dr. Davis Jenkins, from the Community College Research Center at Columbia and co-author of Redesigning America’s Community Colleges: A Clearer Path to Success provided WCCC with an analysis to assist in this review of program information for students. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Previously the adjunct faculty had offices in the modular building. This building was dismantled in the summer of 2017 to make room for the new Learning Annex. Adjunct faculty have been temporarily relocated to the upper floor of the main building. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. FYE accounted for 230 online registrations in fall 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Data according to the NEW JERSEY Report Cards for 9-12 grade at the six public Warren County high schools. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. All senior staff, advisors, and faculty seeking promotion have been required to take the test. The rationale behind this is for employees to understand how difficult it is for students to enter WCCC as applicants and immediately take a test with little preparation and some trepidation about beginning college. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Science is the only subject that relied heavily on group tutoring in 2015-16. Hours were inflated by counting students rather than paid tutoring hours. Paid tutoring hours in 2015-16 vs. 2016-17 for science tutors were very similar. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. In May 2016, the Chairs of the OA/PR and Assessment committees attended a Middle States workshop on assessment. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. For example, mathematics is not a major at WCCC, but its courses are reviewed as a separate “program.” The same is true with the general education requirements imbedded in the English, social science and science curricula. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. New Jersey teachers have received a great deal of negative publicity over the past eight years. This has affected enrollments in New Jersey education programs. The Early Childhood program enrollment dropped to an unsustainable level and the program was put on moratorium in 2016. Current students are completing the program during 2017-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Self-reported credits was problematic at the time because students might have previously earned 12 remedial credits, which do not count towards a degree. Students therefore tended to overestimate the credits earned. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. The New Jersey legislature currently is considering legislation to mandate that all A.A., A.S. and A. A. S. programs do not exceed 60 credits unless required by licensure or accreditation agencies for certification. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The Curriculum and Instruction Committee (C & I Committee) is a faculty/staff committee that meets monthly. They are charged with making recommendations to the President and senior administration on curricular and academic matters. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The College’s general education curriculum for A.A., A.S. and A.F.A. programs call for students to take either two math courses and one science course or two science courses and one math course. Students in non-STEM programs therefore can take two college-level math courses. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Excludes Pre-Calculus and Calculus classes. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Warren County Freeholders provide $75.000 in subsidy to defray the administrative costs of this program within the College’s annual county appropriation. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. WCCC voluntarily withdrew credit and noncredit certificates from Title IV support in 2008. This was based on a significant number of loan defaults in the noncredit programs. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Because of the regionalization of the County Superintendent’s office, the current County Superintendent has opted not to participate on the WCCC Board of Trustees and has never taken the oath of office or voted. She does attend the “State of the College” meetings.

    This process differs with each gubernatorial administration. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. New Jersey community colleges are not permitted to issue debt or to offer student housing. As the Foundation has been deemed a component unit of the College, it also does not have the ability to independently finance housing or auxiliary facilities. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)