

# **Assurance Argument**

## **Lewis and Clark Community College - IL**

**Review date: 4/3/2023**

# 1 - Mission

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

## 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

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

## Argument

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### 1.A.1.

Lewis and Clark's (L&C) mission documents ([Mission](#), [Vision](#), [Values](#), and [Strategic Plan](#)) continue to be revisited and revised as needed through an inclusive strategic planning process, reflecting institutional culture and one that engages all primary constituencies: [students](#), [faculty](#), [staff](#), and [members of the community](#). As a part of 2022-2025 strategic planning effort, all primary constituencies were engaged in a reevaluation or reaffirmation of the mission, purposes, vision, and values. In December, 2020, a survey was distributed to students, team members (faculty, staff, and administrators), and members of the community, allowing for an opportunity for individuals to reflect on the College's guiding statements. In April, 2022, the 2022-2025 strategic planning documents were reaffirmed by the [College's Board of Trustees](#).

The College's goals align with the Illinois' statutory mission for community colleges, and the [Illinois Community College Board \(ICCB\) Administrative Rules](#) which define terms such as associate degree, certificate, and remedial education.

### 1.A.2.

The College's mission is kept current with periodic review, revision, and reaffirmation. The strategic plan and related documents were created in June, 2021 and reaffirmed by the College's Board of Trustees in April, 2022.

## Mission

L&C [mission statement](#) states that we are about "empowering people by raising aspirations and fostering achievement through dynamic, compassionate and responsible learning experiences."

Our core function is educating a person, which means our "learning experiences" involve not just classroom but also student activities, athletics, leadership experiences, service opportunities, and the many support services L&C provides. Dedicated team members continually strive to foster achievement in our students by caring for them (compassion) and challenging and encouraging them to reach their goals. The dynamism of caring people working to support student achievement across campus displays our responsibility as an institution.

## Vision

Our [vision](#) directs us “to be the community’s first choice for the most relevant, inclusive, equitable, and highest quality learning experiences for all students and all communities.” The College combines the best of the traditional and the modern to provide a learning environment that is accessible, inclusive, and highly conducive to learning. Programs and support services are carefully designed to foster social interaction, personal enrichment, physical development, and job skills enhancement. L&C team members exemplify the highest standards of service and performance, and take pride in the achievement of our students and the College as a whole. Our actions reflect our core values of being student-focused, valuing people, building community relationships, diversity and inclusion, integrity, and responsibility. We hold ourselves accountable for our performance as educators and as stewards of the resources entrusted to us. The real measure of our efforts is the personal and academic success of our students, the cultural enrichment and overall well-being of the communities we serve, and the economic vitality of the region.

## Core Values

The College recently adopted core values after a thorough [engagement](#) with all stakeholders. As noted, these values were adopted and approved by the Board of Trustees in April 2022. These values inform our program planning, execution, and review. The values are the fundamental components informing how we carry out our mission and achieve our vision. These values focus our activities on every constituency we serve, including our students and the broader communities in our community college district. This is a list of programs and services that align with our values:

- Student-focused – [Advisement](#) and [Enrollment](#), [Financial Aid](#), [Student Support Services](#), [Writing Desk](#), [Math and Science Resource Center](#), and [Snack Pantry](#).
- Integrity – Team members committed to fairness in all dealings with students from Enrollment to Financial Aid, from Athletics to Academics, and from Security to Maintenance which are supported by [mandatory training](#) in sexual harassment, waste and fraud, and professional ethics.
- Responsibility – A function of Integrity, all team members discharge their duties in a faithful manner mindful of standards of conduct and demeanor; mandatory training for team members on sexual harassment, waste and fraud, and basic professional ethics.
- Valuing People – National Volunteer Week activities, [College for Life](#), [College for Kids](#), [Adult Education](#), and [Trailblazers Give Back](#).
- Diversity and Inclusion – Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Excellence, [Pride Club](#), [Black Student Union](#), [1619 Project](#), programming for [Native American Heritage Month](#), [Black History Month](#), and [Women’s History Month](#).
- Building Community Relationships – engagement with [Riverbend Growth Association](#) events, [High School Partnerships](#), Mannie Jackson Center [serving Edwardsville High School](#), [Sculpture Gardens](#), National Great Rivers Research and Education Center ([NGRREC](#)), and [Scott Bibb Center](#) all sustain our relations with the wider community.

### 1.A.3.

The [Key Directions of the Strategic Plan](#) and in the L&C mission and vision documents explicitly identify how various groups are to be served by the College. For example, both transfer and career students must be prepared when they matriculate to a four-year institution or enter the workforce. For transfer students, there are agreements in place with approximately 40 four-year institutions. For career and technical education students, L&C offers 35 associate degree programs and 83 certificate programs. Many students from district high schools can earn college credit through the [High School Partnership](#) (HSP) program. Students who are not prepared for college-level coursework can be provided with the necessary training to enter post-secondary classes. L&C meets this purpose through developmental education, General Education Development ([GED](#)), and [Adult Education](#) courses. Job skills and lifelong learning opportunities are available through the Workforce Education, Solutions and Safety Training ([WESST](#)) program as well as two programs for students with developmental disabilities, [College for Life](#) and [Supported College Transition Program](#).

Instruction and student services are evaluated routinely through course evaluations and [program reviews](#). State-of-the-art technology is available as a result of the College's Technology Fund which has enabled L&C to continually update the technology needs of classrooms and labs. Education and research activities and the economic development of the College district is supported through the [NGRREC](#), the [Scott Bibb Center](#), and the College's work with groups such as the [River Bend Growth Association](#), and the [Southwestern Illinois Employers Association](#). The final purpose, contributing to the advancement and well-being of citizens, can be seen in the many activities that take place at the Godfrey and N.O. Nelson campuses. Approximately 200,000 people visit L&C annually for events, activities, and meetings.

#### **1.A.4.**

##### **Academics**

An examination of the College catalog and strategic plan attests to the strong consistency between the mission and the programs offered by L&C. This is most evident when one examines our [Core Values](#): "student-focused, integrity, responsibility, valuing people, diversity and inclusion, and building community relationships." Each of these six values directly aligns with our mission of "empowering people by raising aspirations and fostering achievement through dynamic, compassionate, and responsible learning experiences." L&C's academic curriculum speaks to our core values by engaging our community through a diverse offering of dynamic learning experiences including 41 associate degree programs and 85 certificate programs. A number of programs, including [Adult Education](#), [GED](#), and [developmental education](#), serve students who need additional preparation for college-level course work, which aligns with our mission of empowering people. L&C's [HSP](#) program [enrolled](#) an average of 2809 students per year over the last three years, creating access to college-level learning for high school students.

L&C also offers services for students with intellectual disabilities/developmental disabilities not typically served at a community college. Our [Supported College Transition Program](#) offers support for students with little mainstreaming classroom experience in high school by offering smaller sections of college developmental courses (reading, English, and math) with the additional support provided by a study skills class and a college transition class.

L&C's [College for Life Program](#) is designed for students needing academic adjustments or accommodations who have had few inclusive experiences in high school or who choose not to seek a college credential. The College for Life program not only provides courses that continue the educational experience, but it also provides inclusive social growth opportunities on a college campus, improving access for these students.

These academic programs foster achievement and are indicative of the College's compassionate focus on creating equity and access for students from diverse backgrounds in keeping with L&C's stated mission.

##### **Student Support Services**

L&C established the [Student Support Services Group](#) to meet quarterly. Students interacting with any of L&C's many student support services are tracked via software in order to [capture data](#). This data, in turn, is used by the Student Support Services group to make decisions and advise broader College administration on policies affecting student services. L&C's services range from [counseling](#), [career support](#), and [academic support](#). Student visits to support services are [correlated with student success data and retention data](#) to inform how the College promotes, revises, and launches new student services. These data have informed the development of an intrusive advising model, the creation of L&C's [Snack Pantry](#), [Student Government Association Hygiene Pantry](#), and the expansion of the [Student Success Centers](#) (SSC) on campus (Writing Desk, Nursing tutoring, Math tutoring, and general academic support). All of these programs empower our students to succeed in their chosen program of study.

L&C's success in fulfilling its mission is also evaluated by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). The agency examines 33 factors in determining whether to grant "[Recognition](#)" status to a college. ICCB completed a review of L&C in 2015 and granted Recognition status through 2020, the longest term possible.

##### **Enrollment Profile**

The College's [Office of Institutional Research](#) supports the continual analysis of student enrollment data and contrasts these data against the demographic data of the population in the district we serve. The College administration regularly reviews enrollment trend data with an eye toward promoting access, equity, and fostering diversity on campus, in keeping with our mission. Our [comprehensive program review](#) process for academic offerings and student services also focuses heavily on demographic data trends to inform practice and improve retention and access.

### **L&C's College Population**

L&C's student [enrollment profile](#) reflects well the [demographics](#) of the College's district. As of fall 2022, most recent data, the community at large shows the following: 86.43% are White, non-Hispanic, 7.19% are Black, non-Hispanic, 2.77 are White, Hispanic with Two or More Races, non-Hispanic being 1.92 % and Asian, non-Hispanic at 0.92%. One can find the remaining percentages in the evidence file, but these account for 99.23% of the L&C district's ethnic breakdown. L&C's enrollment profile is close to this but differs by a slant towards more diversity. The College has 77.4% White, non-Hispanic and 10.1% of Black, non-Hispanic. This shows a 2.81% increase in African-Americans over the wider district, comparatively there is an 9.03% drop in White, non-Hispanic category. The category of Hispanic is essentially the same at 2.9% for the College and 2.77% for the wider district. A similar convergence is seen with the "Two or More Races" where the District records 1.92% while the College reports 2.6%. This look at our enrollment profile clearly shows that L&C reflects the general character of its district and indicates the slightly better diversified population. The only caveat on this comparison is that 5.3% of our students did not identify themselves in any category and that leaves us in a position of caution. However, such numbers remain encouraging for our efforts at promoting access, equity, and diversity on campus.

#### **1.A.5.**

The College's mission is expressed in many public documents, including the strategic plan, the website, board highlights, Board of Trustees policy manual, and employment position descriptions. The mission is prominently displayed in all of L&C's facilities. Framed versions of the mission are displayed in many of the offices, meeting rooms, and classrooms across the campuses.

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## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

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

### Argument

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#### 1.B.1

L&C's [vision statement](#) is clear about the College's commitment to the public good: *Our Vision is to be the community's first choice for the most relevant, inclusive, equitable, and highest quality learning experiences for all students and all communities.*

The [2022-2025 Strategic Plan](#) includes Key Direction Four which aims to broaden community and educational collaboration related to public engagement and service leadership. This component of our strategic plan is supported by three aspirations involving: service and volunteerism, collaboration with community and rural partners, and connecting with community alumni. A fourth aspiration is celebrating and sharing any and all successes with the community. Such public engagements will drive improvements in civic, economic, and cultural quality of life.

This focus on public service embedded in Key Direction Four is demonstrated through some of the unique programs and services that directly benefit the individuals and communities in the district we serve. In terms of instruction, [L&C's dual credit program](#) enrolls more than 2,700 high school students every semester, contributing significantly to the public good in the form of accelerated completion of academic studies for students and financial savings for students and their families. [L&C's Family Health Center](#) and the [Paul Hanks Dental Clinic](#) are open to members of the public to access for the benefit of their own health and have the added benefit of providing our students the opportunity to hone their skills in a clinical setting on our campus. Our volunteerism outreach efforts is carried by our "[Trailblazers Give Back!](#)" project which brings team members together to work on behalf of the community organizations like the Rotary Club and Senior Services. Students also volunteer in the community through our National Volunteer Week activities every April.

Our community partnerships are also indicative of our focus on community service. Free income tax service assistance is made available to low- and moderate- income area families in cooperation with the [Alton Area Tax Project](#) and the [Gateway EITC Community Coalition](#). Our campuses are hubs for the arts and humanities in the communities we serve and include public access to the Monticello [Sculpture Gardens](#) and [events and concerts](#) in the Ann Whitney Olin Theatre in the Hatheway Cultural Center, which are open to the public for little or no cost. We also partner with arts organizations in the community, such as the [Alton Youth Symphony Orchestra](#), who are allowed to use L&C's facilities for no cost as a benefit to the youth and the broader communities we serve.

To ensure alignment with our educational mission, the [L&C Foundation](#), a 501(c)(3), supports the College's mission through donations and grant procurement and provides \$206,000 in [scholarship funding](#) to students, and \$193,000 in other institutional program support such as equipment, student activities, emergency loans, and grants through the [Echo Academy Fund](#). Other examples include the [Olin Foundation](#), [Templin Foundation](#), and the [NEH Endowment](#).

#### 1.B.2.

The [Illinois Public Community College Act \(110 ILCS 805/\)](#) is the law that established the community colleges in the state of Illinois. The language in the act requires the College to focus its efforts on instructional activities. The members of the [Board of Trustees](#) are district residents who are elected by the local public and who are legally obliged to provide oversight of and authorization for the College's activities. This oversight and authorization extends to financial considerations including grant applications, tax levies, budget oversight, and financial relationships with the College's foundation.

L&C's educational responsibilities are prioritized and operationalized through our [mission, vision, values, and strategic plan](#). Although all of these foundational documents speak to our primary role as an educational institution, our Key Direction statements along with their aspiration components all codify this most clearly:

1. [Key Direction 1](#): Enrollment and Retention – provide aligned, flexible, and accessible recruitment enrollment process, engage students holistically, and align data, policies, processes, and curriculum to support student success.
2. [Key Direction 2](#): Program and Curriculum Development – standardize the academic experience so that it is transparent across curriculum, develop transparent process to explore the need for and feasibility of new Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and support existing programs, encourage innovation and expansion of transfer program offerings.
3. [Key Direction 3](#): Transparent and Inclusive Campus Culture – improve internal communication, communication with students and community, encourage acts of inclusivity and transparency, increase awareness and appreciation of diversity in our team members and students, create a sense of belonging to L&C.
4. [Key Direction 4](#): Broaden Community and Educational Collaboration – develop infrastructure to support and measure the impact service and volunteerism have on campus culture, increase access and visibility through collaboration between main campus and satellites, as well as with rural, business, and community partners to identify opportunities for students while at L&C and after graduation, coordinating with alumni in the community to support business and social interaction.

This review of our strategic plan shows that we are a “student-first” institution and that there are no other purposes that interfere with our pursuit of this goal. Every aspect of the College is geared to providing for a positive student experience.

Additionally, student tuition and fees, one of the College's primary funding sources, are kept low to increase access to education for residents of our district. We provide an affordable opportunity since our tuition and fees are, on average, \$18,396 less than the first two years of instruction at four-year universities in Illinois, indicating a focus on education and retention over revenue generation. Coupled with the continued efforts of L&C's Financial Aid Office and Foundation, we strive to disperse funds for the benefit of student advancement, not making a profit.

### **1.B.3.**

L&C regularly engages with our external constituencies, particularly as a part of the College's strategic planning process. For example, for the 2022-2025 strategic plan, the College sought feedback from all district residents and employers via an [online questionnaire](#) that was shared on the College's website and social media. In the spring of 2021, the College solicited [feedback](#) from various constituency groups to shape the current strategic plan.

We also periodically hold public forums to elicit feedback for major decisions that would impact the College and the community. For instance, multiple public forums both in-person and on Zoom were held in June 2021 for the community to be able to provide feedback on the future trajectory of property owned by the College.

College leadership [regularly interfaces](#) with local school [superintendents and principals](#) as well as guidance counselors to seek feedback about their needs for dual-credit courses and program offerings, which, in turn, allows us to respond to the needs of employers in the region. The College has also initiated a [liaison program](#) to embed team members within district high schools.

The College also actively engages [district employers](#) to meet their needs via contract courses and other vocational training, often offered on site with the employer. Our longstanding partnership with [Phillips 66](#) is evidence of such



relationships.

Additionally, our strategic plan's [Key Direction 4](#) which focuses on Broadening Community and Educational Collaboration has several components, or "Aspirations" that enjoin us to supporting and measuring service and volunteerism, to reach out to all district partners whether rural, business, or local community seeking opportunities for our students both while enrollment and after graduation, to better coordinate communication and engagement with alumni for purpose of increasing opportunities for students but for the general social interaction that would grow the sense of belonging to the L&C family.

This engagement with our community has resulted in several unique and important programs and opportunities for our community and the College. Our high school dual-credit offerings serve 1,511 students at 18 schools in the community. The [College's Center for Access and Accommodations](#) supports students who had Individual Educational Plans (IEP) in high school to be successful in college coursework.

L&C recently entered into an [agreement](#) with the Edwardsville school district to lease space from the College to support their educational offerings. This partnership will support the initial foundation of a relationship between the school district and the College to form a joint diversity, equity, and inclusion partnership.

Additionally, L&C is an active member of the [Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity](#), which seeks to meet the challenge of a severe shortage of employees in this field by offering upskilling for incumbent workers with full tuition coverage.

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## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

### Argument

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#### 1.C.1:

L&C encourages informed citizenship in its curricular and co-curricular offerings. While it can be said that all our course offerings teach critical thinking, which is the key skill for informed citizenship and workplace success, there are several programs and related course activities that especially focus on this: [Philosophy](#), [History](#), [Political Science](#), [Sociology](#), and [Criminal Justice](#) programs all engage students in this way. Not only these general disciplines, but [specific assignments](#) within courses contribute to this important educational goal. Beyond these academic activities, L&C provides co-curricular opportunities which engage students directly with responsible citizenship and workforce readiness. Programs such as [Comprehensive Transition Program \(CTP\) Pathways to Workplace Readiness](#), [YouthBuild](#), and [Highway Construction Careers Training](#) all address this need for our community.

In addition, L&C's [Honor's College "Riverscapes"](#) course which includes field trips around the St. Louis area and directly engages students in collaborative activities which support both citizenship and workforce readiness. The ["Staycation"](#) is a good example as this involves students using their spring break for a collective educational experience over five days. The class is housed together and tours important historical and cultural sites. In [Philosophy](#), it is routine to require critical thinking on a whole range of social-political-cultural issues from our common controversies over abortion, gun control, capital punishment, sexual morality, and social justice to more technical issues of matters of truth, justification, and reason. [History](#), by its very nature, invites students to reflect on the past and to understand their relation to it. [Political Science](#) courses such as American Government routinely raise consciousness about political factions, the processes of elections and government, and the responsibility of a citizen. The concepts of rights, liberty, and constitutional interpretation all figure in these courses. [Communications courses](#) have created many activities engaging students with "live" issues. Titles of some projects are "Hate Has No Home Here", "Benefits of Immigration", and "De-Stigmatizing Mental Illness". Such efforts are significant contributions to informed citizenship and workforce readiness. The [Paralegal program](#) and the [Criminal Justice](#) program offer even more specialized courses that raise the issue of good citizenship and knowing the law. All of this feeds into a mature person's understanding of our society and a basic willingness to play by the rules. This would be fundamental to any workplace success.

The [YouthBuild](#) program engages mostly low-income, high school non-completers of diverse backgrounds. The program provides basic skills, GED preparation, and hands on training in green construction. It also works to "bridge" students to post-secondary level courses at the College or place them in construction related jobs. The grand total for funding over the years is over 5 million dollars, and the program has expanded to add pathways in computer careers, health sciences, and transportation, distribution, and logistics. During the pandemic, solar installation training was added.

Our [CTP Pathway to Workplace Readiness program](#) provides an opportunity to earn a "Certificate of Achievement in Workplace Readiness". This program requires 60 semester hours/1088 clock hours. All courses are approved by

the ICCB for transfer, developmental, or vocational credit. This is of inestimable value for students not committed to completing an AA/AS degree.

Additional co-curricular activities promoting informed citizenship and workplace success include the College's [Student Government Association](#). This organization conducts an annual election for a member of the student body to sit on the College's Board of Trustees as an advisory member. The student trustee shares the students' perspective with the Board and shares Board activities with the broader Student Government Association to promote college citizenship and models broader American informed citizenship and participation in local government.

L&C's award-winning campus newspaper, [The Bridge](#), promotes informed citizenship as it aims to inform, entertain, and connect the campus community. The engagement with producing a newspaper teaches honesty in citizenship and collaborative and democratic ideals. It is an opportunity for a range of talents covering news writing, advertising, sales, photography, and graphic design.

L&C's [Veteran's Club](#) allows students who have already served their country to serve the L&C district by recruiting former service members into academic programs, promoting service in the military, and by serving the community with outreach projects such as blood drives, recycling of eyeglasses, contributing food to both the Crisis Food Center and the Salvation Army, and supporting Toys for Tots. The blood drive, in sponsorship with a local radio station, KSHE, collects over 700 units.

Particular student activities have focused on global citizenship and community, such as a rally held in March of 2022 in support and solidarity with Ukraine. The [calendar of student activities](#) routinely includes activities that promote social cohesion and civility such as ice cream socials, live music events, blood drives, Fall Fest campus celebration, and in November, "[Native American Heritage](#)" month, a talk on the history and culture of the Cahokia Mounds builders, who created the largest earthworks in North America which housed a Native American metropolis in the Mississippian period (900-1400 CE).

Through "[Trailblazers Give Back](#)" the College supports civic engagement through volunteerism. Team members coordinate continuous volunteer activities and opportunities for team members and students throughout the year. These activities have resulted in the creation of an on-campus food pantry and community service projects.

The College's [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence \(DEI\)](#) sponsors important and informative programs such as the "[1619 Project](#)" which was viewed and discussed in multiple sessions in the spring of 2022 and started fall semester of 2022 with a "[Multicultural Student Kick Off](#)" and a "[ReConnect Summit](#)" for team members. This latter program runs through January 2023 in multiple sessions. The goal is to bring people together to re-connect as not only colleagues, but as human beings. Such programs have been well-attended. In addition, a [Campus Climate Survey](#) incorporated specific questions to gather data on the state of the campus with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion issues.

Various extra-curricular clubs support our efforts at preparing students for citizenship and work. Examples of these clubs are: [LC Pride](#), [Campus Ministry](#), [Black Student Association](#), and [Veteran's Club](#). In addition, the Student Government Association, whose president sits on the Board of Trustees in an advisory capacity, is hands-on training and experience in citizenship. Such organizations model the larger complexities of living in a democratic society of different poles of interest and power. Learning to navigate successfully in our campus organizations is essential preparation for life and workforce success.

## 1.C.2.

In 2005, L&C publicly confirmed the College's commitment to serving a diverse community by approving a ten-year Diversity and Inclusion Plan. The L&C Board of Trustees reaffirmed their commitment in 2016 with the adoption of the [2016-2026 Diversity and Inclusion Plan](#). The College's most recent [updated Strategic Plan](#) establishes the Key Direction of building a transparent and inclusive campus culture. In addition, work has already begun to extend this effort beyond 2026 with the creation of the [DEI Blueprint](#) foundational document. All of these actions attest to our principled dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The [Diversity Statement](#) recognizes the cultural challenges faced by students, the College's obligation to help overcome the challenges, and the role diversity and inclusion play in L&C's mission. To address these challenges, the College updated the existing position of Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion to the [Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence](#) (DEI) that reports directly to the President of the College. This new organization along with the new [DEI Blueprint](#) ties more directly into our Strategic Plan and its Key Directions. The Objectives of DEI are:

1. *Implement shared definitions of diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence*
2. *Increase DEI-related communication, training, and professional development*
3. *Strengthen recruitment, hiring, on-boarding, and retention practices which address and advance DEI*
4. *Work towards eliminating student equity gaps*
5. *Build capacity for all team members to prioritize DEI work*

As defined in the DEI Blueprint: *The Director of DEI will work with all team members to plan and execute diversity trainings, events, activities, and policies. Some of the teams established with a DEI focus are the Diversity Council and the Multicultural Recruitment, Engagement, and Retention mover team. The Office of DEI has collaborated with external educational and community organizations to maintain a continuing educational dialogue on topics of diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence.*

As part of the ongoing effort to achieve all of these goals, L&C's [Diversity Council](#), a faculty-led institutional standing committee, sponsors programs and activities during the academic year to promote cross cultural understanding and dialogue / communications among different ethnicities and cultures. The Council also offers co-curricular [programming](#) that might otherwise not be available to students.

Diversity of many forms is recognized and embraced at L&C. These efforts are articulated with some detail in the [Underrepresented Groups Report](#) submitted annually to the ICCB. There are many examples of L&C's efforts to promote understanding, tolerance, and appreciation for different cultures, ethnicities, religions, and other groups; as well as many examples of L&C's efforts to promote the recruitment and success of students of various backgrounds. The following highlights these efforts:

- L&C's enrollment services and adult education departments actively seek to recruit African-American, Hispanic, and other minority students.
- One of the objectives in the [Enrollment Development and Management Plan](#) is to increase minority enrollment. Steps that have been taken to support the goal include meeting with minority high school students, recruiting through minority churches in the region, and working with high schools to increase minority enrollment in dual credit courses.
- The federal [TRiO](#) programs, [Upward Bound](#) and [Talent Search](#), recruit and provide academic and support services for minority students and others who may be academically and economically challenged or the first in their families to attend college.
- The [L&C Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence](#) (DEI) recruits minority students through visits to local high schools and participation in community events, assists minority students with adjusting to college life and demands, creates and promotes diversity-related programming (such as the 1619 Project, ReConnect Summit, and Campus survey, all noted in 1.C.1. above), monitors the academic progress of minority students, and assists international students with obtaining necessary services in the local community.
  - Currently, the DEI sponsors three campus organizations: the Black Student Association, the International Student Association, and LC Pride, which is a support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and androgynous students and allies.
- Through the Office of Student Affairs, L&C also has a program for [academic monitoring](#) of student athletes, many of whom are minorities and/or foreign nationals. Through this program, athletes' academic performance is closely monitored and students are given tutoring and other assistance to help them succeed.
- The College's [Center for Access and Accommodations](#) also works with students experiencing disabilities which impact their studies. Counseling and coordinating with faculty help this student population succeed.
- The College's [Supported College Transition](#) (SCT) and [College for Life](#) (CFL) programs assist students with developmental learning, neurological, hearing, visual, mobility, and emotional disabilities. The College has

helped students with severe intellectual disabilities, Down's syndrome, autism, spina bifida, and cerebral palsy. In July 2016, the College's application for a [Comprehensive Transition Program](#) (CTP) was approved by the Department of Education. The credential that will be awarded in the CTP is the Certificate of Workplace Readiness, and the courses are fully eligible for federal financial aid.

- The federally funded [Perkins program](#) serves career program students who may academically or economically disadvantaged. This may include students who are disabled, displaced homemakers, single parents, students with limited English proficiency, and/or non-traditional students (gender-based designation is based on specific career program).
- The L&C [Foundation](#) supports the College and its students through a range of [endowed and annual scholarships](#), some of which are targeted to minority students and students with special needs. Female students are eligible for scholarships through the Monticello Foundation Scholarships for Deserving Women, the Monticello Women's Athletic Scholarships, the Godfrey Women's Club Scholarship, the Marlene Barach Scholarship for Women, and the Zonta Club of Alton-Wood River Scholarship. Scholarships for minority students include the L&C Minority Student Scholarship and the Olin Minority Scholarship.
- The Alton-Godfrey Lions Club provides a scholarship for students with physical disabilities. Students with intellectual disabilities are eligible for College for Life scholarships funded largely through local corporations.
- Emergency loan funds are available for any student facing a financial emergency.
- Veterans, who quite often face fiscal and personal challenges, receive financial assistance through the [Veterans Emergency Loan Fund](#).

L&C's commitment to diversity is also reflected in the General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) which is required of all transfer students and offers a range of non-western courses in the humanities, fine arts, and social / behavioral sciences. Students may select from eleven such courses, including: [Comparative Religions](#), [Literature of Non-Western Cultures](#), [Eastern Philosophy](#), [Non-Western Art](#), [Non-Western Music](#), [Cultural Anthropology](#), [Geography by World Regions](#), [Human Geography](#), [World History I](#), [World History II](#), and [History of Latin America](#).

L&C continues to reach out to the community with programs and services that target the underserved in both remote rural communities and urban centers. The College frequently collaborates with local governments and civic organizations to address healthcare, education, workforce training, and social services. Through the [Family Health Clinic](#) (FHC) and the [Paul Hanks Dental Clinic](#) on campus, L&C has been able to provide primary health and dental care outreach services for our district. The FHC provides services for minor illnesses and first aid treatment of injuries, health counseling and assistance with minor acute and chronic illnesses, and TB skin testing. FHC team members also offer health education programs, and with the collaboration of county health departments, conduct "well-women" examinations (breast examinations and pap smears), seasonal flu shots, and other prevention and healthcare services throughout the College's district. L&C nursing students receive training and practical experience in caring for remotely located populations and minorities and individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

The grant-funded [YouthBuild](#) program also addresses this criterion. Enrolling students are mostly low-income, high school drop-outs, and many are African-American youth. The program provides basic skills, GED preparation, and hands on training in green construction trades. It also works to "bridge" students to post-secondary level work at the College or place them in construction related jobs. The grand total of funding over the years is over 5 million dollars. A similar program, the "[Highway Construction Careers Training](#)" initiative was launched in 2011. This program continues to provide training critical for reliable employment in the highway construction field. Also, L&C has invested more than \$5 million to renovate the vacated elementary school that houses the programs, and has renamed the center in recognition of Scott Bibb. Mr. Bibb, an African-American father of two school-age children, who was at the center of seven circuit desegregation court trials that resulted in five appeals to the Illinois Supreme Court from 1897-1908. The renovated [Bibb Center](#) has been praised by community leaders who see the investment as an economic catalyst for a neighborhood that has been in decline. The Bibb Center continues its mission to serve under-privileged youth and workers in transition.

The College has worked to assist low-income students in grades 8-12 through its [Talent Search](#) program which

was recently awarded a renewal grant. The program is a college readiness program that serves low-income students with a GPA of 2.5 or higher, who will be first generation college students. L&C assists high school seniors throughout six of the College district's counties. Talent Search students are given supplemental instruction, various opportunities for cultural enrichment, and field trips exposing them to college options and experiences. The program included 100 seniors who graduated in 2022, 42 of these seniors went on to enroll in higher education. Nineteen of the students served through Talent Search enrolled at L&C.

Veteran students benefit through the services provided by L&C's [Veteran Services](#) Department. The College has been designated a [Military Friendly](#) school for 2020-2021, a distinction for which the College applies annually. The designation is awarded to colleges and universities that rank in the top 20 percent nationally in services provided to veterans.

### 1C.3.

Although concerns have been raised about the climate of respect at L&C, the institution remains committed to fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment for all stakeholders. L&C not only fosters, but actualizes a climate of respect among all parties to the College.

Key Direction 3 of our [Strategic Plan](#) is aimed at "building a transparent and inclusive campus culture." The components of this involves several "mover teams" working to improve internal communication, to improve communication with students and community members, to encourage acts of inclusivity and transparency, to increase the awareness and appreciation of diversity in our team members and students, and to create a sense of belonging to L&C. An important part of this Key Direction is the establishment of the position of [Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence](#). This aspect of our Strategic Plan is concrete evidence of the College's commitment to fulfilling its mission to empower people across the board.

The College supports various extra-curricular clubs that provide a safe place for certain student populations and reinforce the respect for difference among people and the acceptance of that difference. The [LC Pride club](#) was founded by and for LBGQT members of the student body. Having a recognized club to support them is a big step in making this group of students feel included. More long-standing clubs such as the [Black Student Association](#) and the [Veteran's Club](#) provide the same for that population. [A Cross Between](#) adds a dimension of ecumenical toleration among students whose religion is central to their values. The [Office of Student Affairs](#) oversees these clubs, and official clubs must be approved by the [Student Government Association](#). Student activities sponsors many campus-wide activities that bring these diverse groups together. The College's support for all of these is clear evidence that the institution "fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff, and administrators."

With respect to team members, the College's [mandatory training](#) on important issues as sexual harassment, hostile work environment, confidentiality, protection of minors, and Title IX seeks to instill a constant vigilant attitude toward breaches in conduct that affect diversity, equity and inclusion. When team members at all levels are uniformly adhering to such canons of conduct, student life becomes all the more open, relaxed, and welcoming.

L&C's long-standing Diversity Council sponsors programs throughout the school year. The [Calendar of Events](#) shows programs, talks, musical events, and performances among the offerings to not just students, but also the community, who are welcome at these events. Programs around Women's History month, Black History Month, and so forth are a great impetus for keeping the spirit of toleration and acceptance high.

In 2021, through the College's strategic plan efforts, the position of Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion was upgraded to the [Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence](#). Through this expanded effort the College offers programs and events throughout the year. For example, the recent "[Re-Connect Summit Sessions](#)" sponsored by DEI brings faculty together periodically to re-connect with peers and to foster stronger working relationships. The DEI Office has created a DEI blueprint and an anti-racism policy. for the College. It is anticipated that it will receive Board approval in the spring.

Over and above all of this work has been the adoption of "team member" to replace our traditional references to "faculty," "staff," "administrator," or "employee." This all-inclusive term serves to reinforce the community spirit

of the institution and broadly highlights our seriousness with all efforts involving diversity and equity.

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## 1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

### Summary

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L&C's Mission Statement is displayed proudly across the campus. This statement and condensed versions of it are publicly visible in both physical and digital formats. The L&C website has numerous instances of the mission statement, especially condensed versions. The President includes the mission statement in the Strategic Plan.

L&C policies and practices have been brought into alignment with the mission statement. Education and service are "empowering" activities that benefit the students and the community. L&C discharges its duty to the mission statement in Enrollment Services, Financial Aid, Adult Education, High School Partnership program, Corporate and Community Learning, and programs such as YouthBuild, Upward Bound, and TRIO. Team members working in these areas embrace their role and approach their work with compassion and energy in serving our constituency.

Academic programs add breadth and depth to the mission statement's impact on the College. Whether in humanities, liberal arts, business, sciences, or career programs instruction is about student-learning and getting the best for our students. The focus on student learning is the means by which aspirations are bolstered and achievements gained.

Special programs such as College for Kids, College for Life, Talent Search, the FabLab, and National Great Rivers Research and Education Center are all motivated by the mission statement to "empower people". The College's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence is strongly aligned with the mission statement as it addresses traditional obstacles facing underrepresented constituencies and works to bring disadvantaged students into the mainstream of education. The DEI Blueprint is a clear roadmap of L&C's commitment not only to diversity but its mission statement.

Additional programs such as our Family Health Clinic, the Paul Hanks Dental Clinic, and the Scott Bibb Center provide services to the community that support, and therefore "empower," people in pursuing their dreams. In all of these ways, L&C's operations are guided by its mission statement.

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## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

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

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

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

### Argument

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#### 2.A.1

L&C's [mission](#) has remained unchanged since its last self-study and re-accreditation by HLC. L&C's mission is to empower people by raising aspirations and fostering achievement through dynamic, compassionate, and responsible learning experiences.

Although the College's mission remains supported institution-wide, a survey was conducted in 2021 to reconsider the institution's core values. The [outcome of the survey](#) indicated L&C's core values change to: Student Focused, Integrity, Responsibility, Valuing People, Diversity and Inclusion, and Building Community Relationships. The Mission and Core Values guide, frame and create purpose for our [Strategic Plan](#), which was developed by the institution and adopted by the Board on [June 8, 2021](#).

The institution regularly reviews and develops the College's mission, vision, and core values and the Board adopts it regularly as a key piece to the opening section of the [Board Policy Manual](#).

#### 2.A.2

All L&C activities are operated with integrity with an emphasis on ethical behavior. The College has established numerous policies and procedures to support institutional integrity.

The College's governing board has established numerous policies related to ethical conduct and integrity of operations. The [Board Policy Manual](#) details specific policies, including the College's [Ethical Conduct Policy](#), which among other things, prohibits the solicitation or acceptance of gifts, and the involvement of officers and team members in political activities.

The Board Policy Manual clearly defines other policies and procedures related to [board member responsibility and duties](#), [academic endeavors](#), [fiscal management](#), [student affairs](#), and [human resources](#). All of these defined policies are included in the Board Policy Manual and provide the foundation for ethical activities by all team members of the College.

All members of the L&C Board of Trustees are required to complete the online [Open Meetings Act Training](#) through the Illinois Attorney General. Board members are also invited annually to attend the Association of Community College Trustees conference for ongoing educational information related to topics currently affecting community colleges and trustees. Illinois [Public Act 99-0692](#) also requires all newly elected and appointed college trustees receive four hours of leadership training in specific legal and other subject areas during the 1st, 3rd, and 5th years of their terms. A [compliance record](#) of all mandated board trainings is published on the College's website. [All compliance](#) for board members training is also tracked by the Executive Assistant to the Board.

The College also maintains membership with the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA). Both the president and the designated Board member regularly attend meetings and trainings throughout the state and share back with the other Board members the information gained during these trainings.

The Board meets monthly and as a key part of the meeting they receive a detailed review of College finances as part of their board materials. All meeting materials are posted online utilizing a product called [BoardDocs](#). This is a public facing online database that provides access to these materials to not just internal constituents and Board members, but also the general public. Monthly financial reports include details of College revenues and expenditures, as well as checks issued, checks requiring board approval, contracts requiring board approval, and current bid information. The Board receives a budget health update monthly from the College president and CFO as a part of the regular agenda. Additionally, the College is required by law to submit a balanced budget annually and hold a [public hearing](#) before taking action to approve the budget. Both the preliminary budget and the final budget are posted on the College's website for the public to review. College finances are independently audited by a third party annually and the results of the [audit](#) are presented to the Board in open session and posted online once approved by the Board.

In addition to passing and posting its [Ethical Conduct Policy](#), the College also requires [compliance training](#) for team members on the topic. The Board also annually approves the [College Catalog](#). The Catalog includes the [Student Conduct Code](#) that applies to all students attending L&C.

To ensure the highest ethical standards in everyday practice, L&C has established policies and procedures governing fair and ethical practices across the institution: in governance, business operations and administration, teaching and learning, communications, and personal and professional relationships. These define rules for ethical conduct affecting the Board of Trustees, team members, students, and contractors. And these guiding policies address a wide range of ethical standards, codes of conduct, and acceptable practices, including employment, academic integrity, accounting, and operating standards. In doing so, they clearly and consistently represent and reinforce fair and ethical practices in all of the College's processes.

Policies and procedures outlining ethical guidelines and requirements can be found in a number of documents and manuals, including the [team member policy manual](#) and the [College Catalog](#) - all of which may be accessed via the L&C website as well as Blackboard. New team members are also given a copy of the policy and procedure manual during a new hire orientation on the first day of employment.

All L&C team members are required to participate in ongoing training on a variety of topics including [HIPPA](#), [FERPA](#), [Title IX Awareness and Sexual Violence Prevention](#), [Ethical Conduct](#), and [Anti-Harassment](#) and [Fraud, Waste and Abuse](#). These topics are offered annually, in an effort to consistently introduce and reintroduce the College's policies and raise awareness. The College partners with Vector Solutions (also known as SafeColleges) to provide these annual policy reviews and online training courses.

L&C also regularly engages in research activities through the Institutional Research Department and the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center. The rights of team members, students, and all human subjects are protected in these research activities by [L&C's Policy on Human Subjects Research](#).

The College's policies and numerous procedures are easily accessible on its website linked from the home page under [Consumer Information](#). Here a listing of all current policies are linked to the full detail of the policy. In addition, the Board Policy Manual and the College's team member policy manual are posted in BoardDocs, and are accessible internally through Blackboard. The College's administration, along with legal counsel and the Board of Trustees, regularly consider the addition of new policies and edits to existing policies. State and federal laws also drive the need from time to time to add or update an existing policy. All policy changes are reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.

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## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

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

### Argument

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#### 2.B.1

L&C presents itself clearly and completely to prospective students, current students, and members of the public through numerous media and communication methods. Materials detailing academic and training programs are available on the College's website.

The College's website clearly displays the [Higher Learning Commission's Mark of Affiliation](#) on the home page. The HLC Mark of Affiliation is linked to the HLC website where details of L&C's accreditation status can be viewed.

The College has received numerous third-party accreditations for programs such as Nursing, Occupational Therapy Assisting, Dental Hygiene, Automotive, and Dual Credit. All accrediting agencies of the College are also visible on the College's website on a page labeled [Accreditation](#).

[College cost information](#), along with the current [Tuition and Fees](#) are maintained on the institution's website as well as access to the [Net Price Calculator](#), which estimates tuition, housing and other educational cost information for attending L&C.

Information on [faculty and management staff credentials](#) is published annually in the College's catalog located online.

Board information such as [board bios](#), monthly meeting agendas, monthly meeting minutes, and the tentative and final College budgets and audits are accessible through the College's [Board of Trustees page](#) on the website.

Campus crime statistics are shared annually in accordance with The Clery Act through the posting and sharing of the College's [Annual Security Report](#).

In addition to the website, the College's [annual marketing and communications strategic plan](#) employs numerous media which aim to educate and inform the approximately 212,000 people of the College's district with information related to its programs, offerings, and ongoing achievements.

The Marketing and Public Relations Department regularly sends [press releases](#) to numerous [media outlets](#) throughout the district, and also posts those news stories daily to its website under the "[News](#)" section. Many of those news items and links to area media coverage are included in weekly and monthly email newsletters targeted at [team members](#) and [students](#), and are posted publicly to numerous [social media channels](#) operated by or overseen by the Marketing and PR team. Additionally, the College collects prospective student contact information ongoing utilizing Colleague Recruit, the College's CRM product, and regularly sends [messages](#) directly to prospective students aimed at key registration dates, open houses, and other newsworthy announcements.

The Marketing and Public Relations team uses social media not only to communicate with constituents, but to engage with them as well. Comments and direct messages are monitored at all hours of the day and routinely

responded to in a timely manner. In addition to this, Marketing and Public Relations team members also monitor web chat functionality through [tawk.to](http://tawk.to) throughout regular business hours and ensure after hours messages are followed up with in a timely manner.

L&C Marketing and Public Relations team has been [recognized](#) numerous times by the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR) at both the national and district levels for their outstanding communication efforts. The College's specialists have also [presented innovative topics](#) at NCMPR conferences over the years and the current Marketing and Public Relations Manager took part in [NCMPR's Leadership Institute in 2022-2023](#).

In 2021, the Marketing and Public Relations team led an extensive brand and website refresh project, engaging the two-year higher education marketing experts at [Interact Communications](#) to help the College research and better understand its brand and how it is perceived by various stakeholders throughout the community. The [process](#) involved numerous phases of research, including two rounds of focus groups and 500 anonymous phone surveys with district residents.

It's clear, in engaging with L&C stakeholders, that the institution has successfully adopted the spirit and philosophy of its namesakes in its branding. Not surprisingly, [test attributes](#) like "Impactful Experiences," "Hidden Resource," "Opportunities" and "Partnerships" rose to the top, while high-ranking Phase 2 concepts included phrases like "Big," "World," "Stand Out" "Blaze" and "Forward." Between the name and the proven, real-world discoveries of countless students and graduates, L&C evokes an honest and distinct essence of guided adventure: Idyllic and unexplored – yet accelerated and outcome-driven.

The name (and ensuing reputation) does so much of this work that it makes sense to "brand" marketing materials with a simple, powerful call-to-action that encompasses this essence entirely, and that is so completely owned by L&C that it wouldn't work anywhere else. "Lewis and Clark Community College: Discover" emerged as the [College's new brand](#), supported by a new suite of logos, an updated color palette and new graphical treatments and messaging to propel the College forward.

The College is now undergoing a website redesign with the new branding as the driving force. The new design will feature advanced functionality for users, and a stronger navigation experience. The new site is expected to launch May 12, 2023.

L&C community engagement and outward recruitment efforts also create unique opportunities for the College to regularly communicate offerings to its constituents. L&C's program coordinators, along with representatives from its High School Partnership Program, Recruiters and the Admissions office, routinely make visits to area high schools to market its program offerings and recruit students to L&C. During these visits, L&C team members have an opportunity to speak one-on-one with prospective students in the district and provide them with the most important information they will need related to enrolling in their program of choice at L&C.

In 2022, L&C introduced [high school liaisons](#) into targeted district high schools. These L&C team members spend numerous hours each week embedded in the high schools to answer questions for potential students, guidance counselors, high school administrators, and teachers. In addition, the College President, along with other members of the administrative team, regularly meet with area superintendents and high school administrators to gain feedback and assess the needs of our district high schools and their students. Additionally, annual meetings are hosted at L&C to provide the latest information to district [high school counselors](#). Communication and [meetings](#) with College administration and the district's high school principals and superintendents also take place multiple times a year both on and off campus.

Upon enrolling as a new credit student, individuals take part in [new student orientation](#), during which the enrollment team provides every student with the information and resources they will need to be successful at L&C. This new student orientation has recently been revised in an effort born from the College's strategic plan. This revitalized new student orientation takes into account feedback from current students regarding barriers they have encountered as a student of L&C. The New Student Orientation is redesigned for students and family to experience the College community with meet and greets, scheduling assistance, campus tours and navigation tours, exposure to student clubs and associations, and information regarding resources for student success at L&C.

As part of the College's ongoing focus on retention and student success, numerous direct communications are planned and take place between an advisor and students deemed "at risk of failure" throughout their time at L&C, in an effort to be proactive.

In addition to academic advisement, the College's Financial Aid department offered numerous financial literacy workshops prior to the pandemic. Since that time, the department has refocused its efforts on building out a financial literacy webpage that is expected to be launched in the Fall of 2023.

Through the pandemic, the need for more constant and direct communication led to L&C bolstering its SMS/text communication with students, as well as online chat features, which provide students and prospective students the opportunity to communicate with a College team member immediately.

## **2.B.2**

Research opportunities are provided through the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC). NGRREC is a collaborative partnership between the Illinois Natural History Survey, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and L&C. Research at NGRREC focuses on all aspects of large river ecology and management; and is funded directly through the center and through grants. Each year NGRREC hosts [quarterly internship programs](#) for College sophomores, juniors and seniors. These paid internship opportunities give students an opportunity to gain real experience in a variety of environmental careers such as ecological research, education, social science, and policy.

Additionally, participants in the [Honors College](#) are required to complete research, which is presented in the annual L&C Honors College Exposition. In February 2023, L&C hosted the [Honors Council of the Illinois Region \(HCIR\) Student Symposium](#), which displayed research projects of Honors Colleges in institutions throughout Illinois.

Community engagement is evidenced through initiatives by some of our academic programs, [student organizations](#), and athletics; and the College's involvement in [National Volunteer Week](#).

Athletics teams compete for the [President's Cup](#), which awards the top athletic team based on several categories including team GPA and community service. The Veterans Club and Black Student Association sponsor regular [blood drives](#). The [Veterans Club](#) also sponsored a Veterans Day meal and ceremony, and donates to non-profit organizations through fundraising.

Student organizations and academic departments were involved in [Hiking through the Holidays](#), which brought numerous individuals and groups to campus to walk through a [lit trail on campus](#) during the holiday season.

Every year WLCA raises funds through [89 Hours of Christmas](#), an event during which two radio broadcasting students take over the station and broadcast live for 89.9 consecutive hours to raise money for the Boys and Girls Club of Alton.

Phi Theta Kappa students annually produce an [Honors in Action Project](#). One project was the PTK History Crawl, a free tour of Godfrey and Alton that aimed to connect people with local history and explore the impact this connection had on the participants.

During National Volunteer Week, the Coordinator of Student Activities connected with local non-profit organizations for [volunteer opportunities](#) and connected team members and students through the LC Cares volunteer initiative.

Experiential learning occurs through practica and internship experiences in our academic programs. WLCA 89.9-FM, L&C's award-winning radio station, gives students first-hand experience in a real [broadcasting and podcasting](#) environment. Work on the student newspaper, [The Bridge](#), prepares students for careers in commercial print media and is open to all L&C students who are willing to work very hard to reach the highest standards. Exercise Science provides athletic training services to athletes and community members. The [Paul B. Hanks Dental Clinic](#) allows dental assisting students to provide reduced cost dental screenings and cleanings to the

greater campus community. Nursing and occupational therapy assistant complete practica in local medical and rehabilitation facilities. Nursing students also provide free blood pressures readings and assist with campus vaccination efforts. Architectural technology students participate in internships with area architecture firms; and have provided design input on a renovation and extension of the Campus Safety building. Restoration ecology students hold scheduled [burns of invasive species on campus](#) and helped carve out hiking trails on campus. Automotive technology performed maintenance on campus and community vehicles and have used additional funds that were raised for special projects like high performance vehicle enhancements.

The [Student Government Association](#) (SGA) is student organization made up of representatives of student clubs as well as students who are simply interested in a leadership experience on a college campus. SGA has an annually elected executive committee that represents student interests to the College administration.

Similar to students at other colleges, some of our students seek organizations and means of exploring their religious or spiritual purpose. A Cross Between (ACB) is a student organization affiliated with a local church. ACB also has a student organization at the local university—Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (SIUE). These groups plan events together for fun and fellowship. The College also has also converted a classroom into a relaxation and mediation space; and offers yoga courses.

A [study](#) commissioned by the Illinois Community College Board through the Center for Governmental Studies at Northern Illinois University in 2021 clearly demonstrates the most recent economic impacts and student employment outcomes for students of L&C.

According to the study, the net present value of investing in a L&C associate degree or long-term certificate is more than \$180,000, which represents a 23.6% return on a student's initial investment. Additionally, the career job employment rate for L&C completers remained between 79% and 83% between 2010-2018. Career job employment rates typically improve for L&C completers over time. Among those who completed programs in 2009, 82.9% were employed one year after graduating, and 87.8% were employed in career jobs after 10 years.

The same study also illustrated that due to direct and indirect operations of the College, about 621 jobs in the district could be attributed to the College's operations. These operations were associated with about \$44.4 million in economic output. The value added by the College's operations totaled over \$24.4 million to the local economy in fiscal year 2020.

Beyond the effects of direct spending and employment, L&C also strengthens the regional economy by addressing employer's workforce needs. In a survey of L&C business engagement, in 2019 and 2020, 50 employers reported being served by credit and noncredit programs offered by L&C, according to the ICCB/NIU study.

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## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

### Argument

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#### 2.C.1

L&C is governed by a board of trustees composed of [seven members](#) elected at large from the district, which includes all or parts of Madison, Jersey, Calhoun, Macoupin, Greene, Scott, and Morgan counties in Illinois. Members of the College's board of trustees are elected for six-year terms to represent the varying interests of the approximately 212,000 people who reside in these counties. In addition, a student trustee is elected annually by the students and provides an advisory vote and a voice for students in all college governing matters.

Requirements for serving on the Board of Trustees are dictated by the Illinois Community College Board and the Illinois Community College Act, which require candidates for the Board must be at least 18 years of age, interested in serving the College, and live in one of the counties that comprise the L&C district. Recent Board vacancies that have happened prior to elections have found the [Board advertising for applicants](#) to fill those vacancies, encouraging candidates to demonstrate a strong commitment to upholding the College's mission and a vast knowledge of the communities served by L&C. With the most recent vacancy, the Board interviewed all 10 candidates who applied, before unanimously selecting an [area school superintendent](#) to serve on the Board. Current board members include a former chief financial officer, a former certified public accountant, a chief executive officer of a local Urban League chapter, the president of a successful welding firm and alum, a retired director of the Illinois state police, and a superintendent of a local school district.

All members of the L&C Board of Trustees are required to complete the online [Open Meetings Act Training](#) through the Illinois Attorney General. Board members are also invited annually to attend the Association of Community College Trustees conference for ongoing educational information related to topics currently affecting community colleges and trustees. Illinois [Public Act 99-0692](#) also requires all newly elected and appointed college trustees receive four hours of leadership training in specific legal and other subject areas during the 1st, 3rd, and 5th years of their terms. A [compliance record](#) of all mandated board trainings is published on the College's website. [All compliance](#) for board members training is also tracked by the Executive Assistant to the Board.

The College also maintains membership with the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA). Both the president and the designated Board member regularly attend meetings and trainings throughout the state and share back with the other Board members the information gained during these trainings. The current designated Board member was appointed by the chairman and served as the Southwest Region Chair for ICCTA from 2020-2022.

Above and beyond required training, the L&C Board has also taken part in [retreats with the ICCTA Executive](#)

[Director Jim Reed](#). These retreats are aimed at providing additional training topics for the trustees to gain knowledge related to the role of the community college trustee. The initial retreat in 2020 was organized around a "Start. Stop. Continue" framework, to pose the following questions to the Board: What should we start? What should we stop? What should we continue?. Feedback from the Board during this initial session helped guide the Strategic Plan. The [July 2021](#) retreat feedback provided by ICCTA indicated "the Board's engagement reflects its commitment to serving L&C and the communities which it serves." During the 2021 retreat the Board conducted self-evaluations to better understand board strengths and opportunities and heard recommendations from ICCTA about the habits of high-performing boards. The [August 2022](#) retreat focused on strengthening the relationship between the Board and President, setting Board goals and sharing ideas about activities the Board would like to see the College engage in more intentionally. These ongoing training retreats are designed with ICCTA and the President to ensure that trustees are more informed about their roles in order to make decisions in the best interest of the institution.

The L&C Board of Trustees has established policies and practices that outline board expectations, responsibilities and accountability as well as the division of authority and responsibility with the president as chief executive of the institution. The Board of Trustees retains authority for assuring that the institution is meeting its educational objectives, for selection and evaluation of the president, and for assuring that the institution operates with integrity and in an ethical manner. Responsibility for managing the day-to-day operations of the College is delegated to the president, faculty, and senior leadership, per the adopted [Board Policy Manual](#).

## 2.C.2

The Board is responsible for review and adoption of three major guiding documents, which are developed to reflect the College's priorities and preserve and enhance the institution: the [Strategic Plan](#), the annual [Resource Allocation Management Plan \(RAMP\)](#), and the [Annual Budget](#).

The [Strategic Plan](#) is approved by the board every three years; while the RAMP Manual and the budget are reviewed and approved annually. In addition, the Strategic Plan is revisited annually and adapted and adopted with input from members of the Board and College leadership. The Annual Budget is developed each year to align with key directions of the strategic plan, available resources, and the ongoing list of capital and maintenance projects identified annually and in the RAMP Manual.

With the adoption of the new Strategic Plan in 2021 and renewed in 2022 by the Board, the budgeting process of the college has been designed to align and connect college resources directly to supporting the Key Directions of the College. Planning is underway in the current budget process to provide an additional \$250,000 in support for each of the four key directions, which will be allocated by the leads to support projects and investments.

The Board receives communication weekly from the President on topics such as the ongoing construction priorities and capital projects, the development of new academic programs, current budget projections, and personnel and staffing changes, among other topics aimed to keep the Board apprised of important issues affecting the College. The President and his senior leadership group report to the Board of Trustees monthly with key indicators reflecting the condition of the College and its strategic priorities. Each month a budget health and enrollment report are delivered at the beginning of the public meeting. Once a month the College president asks numerous members of leadership team to prepare an [update](#) that is emailed to the Board prior to the Board meeting.

One major example of the Board's deliberations that reflect the priorities to preserve and enhance the institution is the Board's approval in September 2021 to invest significant financial resources to [renovate the historic 170,000-square-foot Main Complex](#) on the Godfrey Campus. Along with 75 percent funding from the state, the College's main student services hub and major classroom complex will undergo a \$50 million renovation. The College has already started work with the design firm Hastings & Chivetta, who was awarded the contract by the state for this renovation project. This effort by the Board is a demonstration of the Board's commitment to preserving and enhancing the institution to the long-term benefit of the College and the students.

## 2.C.3

The L&C Board of Trustees has established practices and policies that provide opportunities for external



constituencies to actively engage with the Board and to present their interests and needs to the Board.

All meetings of the L&C Board of Trustees are open to the public and subject to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Before each meeting, agendas and supporting documentation are posted online to [BoardDocs](#). The minutes from the monthly meetings are presented for public viewing on the College's website via BoardDocs, and video recordings of each meeting are posted online and linked from the College's YouTube channel.

Every month the Board of Trustees sets aside time on the agenda for public comment, and invites district residents, students, and team members to express their concerns or present questions to the Board during this time period. Annually, the Board hosts a public budget hearing where members of the public can ask their questions related to the tentative budget before it is adopted by the Board. [A legal notice of the hearing](#) is submitted and printed in the press prior to the public hearing date.

The Board conducted [listening sessions](#) for the benefit of newly elected members with College departments and team members. This effort enabled members to learn about college departments and offerings, while also getting to know members of the L&C team.

The Board also regularly hosts [Board-Student dinners](#) to hear the voices of students. These meetings are held prior to the regular Board meeting and provide opportunities for students to meet with Board members and provide a forum where students are invited to share current concerns and or questions regarding academic and College operations.

In recent months, following concerns expressed by the Lewis and Clark Faculty Association (LCFA) to the HLC, Board members have met in pairs (to avoid open meeting act violations) with members of [LCFA](#) to hear their concerns and continue to build understanding of faculty needs and priorities for the institution. These sessions have been tremendously beneficial for both the faculty and the Board in terms of addressing complaints by the faculty, and building better relationships between the two groups. There has been substantial progress made to strengthen the relationship between the Board and the faculty association. Following these scheduled meetings with faculty, the Board requested hosting a less formal event where they would have the opportunity to interact with more faculty members. L&C is currently planning two open house receptions to be held in the President's Office March 20 and 21, 2023. All faculty and adjunct faculty will be invited to attend.

During the institution's strategic planning process, the College sought [feedback from community](#) partners and district business leaders to help inform and rank the College's priorities in its most recent Strategic Plan, which ultimately was reviewed and adopted by the Board.

In addition, the College solicited feedback from the community during its recent [rebranding efforts](#) to better engage and understand public perceptions of the institution. The community feedback provided in focus groups and through phone surveys to an independent third-party researcher helped inform the College's new brand, which was ultimately approved and adopted by the Board.

#### **2.C.4**

L&C's Board of Trustees is autonomous in its ability to make decisions in the best interest of the College and all of its stakeholders. Although the Board solicits feedback from numerous constituency groups, it preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution, per Board policy.

The Board's [Ethical Conduct Policy](#) outlines the appropriate rules and regulations as they apply to L&C team members and officers of the College. Under this policy, potential conflict of interest and related ethics violations are addressed through rules that prohibit the acceptance of contributions, donations, gifts, or other incentives or inducements from external parties. It also prohibits external parties from attempting to exert political pressure to influence business or other decisions at L&C. College officers and team members are required to report any attempts to unduly influence College operations, processes, or application of policies. Failure to comply with the College's ethics policy could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Some violations of the policy are subject to criminal prosecution.

Included in the Board Policy Manual, is the [Board Members' Code of Conduct](#), which also outlines the expected ethical and professional conduct of all board members to avoid conflicts of interest.

In accordance with the Illinois Government Ethics Act, units of government and public officials and employees must submit ethics filings to the Madison County Clerk's office annually. All Board members and managers of the College must submit a [Statement of Economic Interest](#) questionnaire which requires board members and team members to disclose all income and business interests that could potentially demonstrate a conflict of interest.

## 2.C.5

As stated in the [2022-2025 Faculty agreement](#), "The governing board and administration of Lewis and Clark Community College are obligated to ensure a viable faculty voice regarding academic policy and governance of the institution, with specific attention to matters of curricula, degree requirements, and instructional standards".

Board responsibilities are clearly defined in [section 201.2](#) of the Board Policy Manual:

- to select and appoint a President who will be the chief administrative officer of the College and will perform the executive functions of the Board;
- to appoint all other College personnel;
- to consider and take appropriate action in all matters of policy relating to the welfare of the College;
- to establish the principal objectives and policies of the College;
- to hold, preserve and monitor the investments of District assets;
- to provide adequate funds for the efficient operation of the College;
- to serve as the Board of Appeals for students, team members, and citizens of the district on matters of policy and policy interpretation; such review being made after all normal and proper procedures through administrative lines have been followed and exhausted; and
- to otherwise fulfill the duties of the Board as prescribed by the Illinois Community College Act.

Faculty and staff work for members of the administrative team and are evaluated according to College team member classification. The Vice President of Academic Affairs and the faculty are responsible for managing all academic affairs. The evaluation of faculty by the vice president and academic freedom of the faculty is clearly outlined in the [collective bargaining agreement](#).

The recommendation for the staffing of faculty is overseen by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and approved by the Board. Over the past 10 years, L&C's student-to-faculty ratio dropped from [1:26 to 1:15](#), and the percentage of credits taught by full-time faculty increased from [45% to 64%](#). These faculty members perform both classroom and non-classroom roles and responsibilities. This includes oversight of existing curriculum, new curriculum development, classroom instruction, office hours, student advising, learning assessment, committee participation, and coaching of new faculty. L&C currently has [90 full-time faculty and 181 adjunct faculty](#).

As codified in the [Faculty Contract](#), all faculty members must participate in at least one institutional committee. The following are examples of academic committees that are faculty led:

- Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL)
- Commencement Committee (COMMC)
- Curriculum and Instruction Committee (CIC)
- General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC)
- Honors Committee (HONC)
- Technology Enhance Learning Committee (TELC)
- Rank and Promotions Committee (RPC)

Faculty also regularly serve on *ad hoc* committees, such as those involved in the Student Success Team, Self-Study for Reaccreditation, and the Strategic Planning Steering Committees.

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## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

### Argument

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#### 2.D

The institution's commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression is well documented in both [Board Policy 404](#) and the [Faculty Contract](#). Within these documents, faculty are reserved the right to teach their courses according to their training and education without undue interference from other interests.

Freedom of expression and respect for diversity are clearly supported by the institution's [Strategic Plan](#), [Diversity and Inclusion Plan](#), and by the College's [Diversity Equity and Inclusion Blueprint](#). The College also offers numerous programs and events throughout the year that allow individuals to express their freedom of expression. Examples throughout the year include the [student activities calendar](#); a [Diversity Calendar of Events](#), which features Black History Month events; Women's History Month presentations, special speakers including artists and scholars, as well as [musical presentations](#) that are all part of the tapestry of L&C.

Since 2021, the newly reorganized Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusive Excellence has promoted [numerous events](#) for the campus community aimed at promoting freedom of expression. Some of the most impactful and well-attended programs included a series of listening sessions and moderated roundtable discussions around the [1619 Project](#), as well as a four-part diversity series titled the [Reconnect Summit](#), which was aimed to bring students and team members together through shared experiences and honest and open conversations.

The College also supports several outlets for free expression for students in the form of the on-campus student-run radio station, [WLCA 89.9 FM](#), the award-winning student newspaper [The Bridge](#), and an annually published student journal for creative writing, [The Peppermint Rooster](#).

Academic disciplines including Speech and Art also provide an annual outlet for students to express their voices and creativity. The annual ["You Have a Voice" Humanities Speech Competition](#) provides a venue for freedom of expression and the teaching of respect for differing opinions. The annual [Student Art Exhibition](#) as well as the annual [Faculty Art Exhibition](#) serve as outlets for freedom of expression and the support of truth in teaching and learning.

[L&C's Honor College](#) annually hosts an [exposition](#) to showcase student's culminating humanities research projects in the form of interactive exhibits and demonstrations.

L&C also hosts a [Digital Commons](#) where publications and research produced by students and team members of the College can be posted and shared via the College's website.

Grievance processes are founded on the principles of free expression and diversity of opinion and point of view. The College maintains formal grievance processes open to all [faculty](#) and [staff](#) and [students](#).

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## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

### Argument

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#### 2.E.1

L&C, in accordance with quality research standards as provided in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) on human subjects research, maintains an [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB). The IRB oversees all research conducted with human participants by or through L&C and ensures that human participants are treated with the utmost respect and fairness throughout the research process as stipulated by the Belmont Report. The IRB has the authority to approve, require modifications in, or disapprove all College research activities.

The College maintains an [Office of Institutional Research](#), which provides research, data, and analysis in support of institutional research and effectiveness. The IR office also assists team members with following all human subjects research criteria and assisting the campus community in promoting responsible research for various institutional queries. The director of Office of Institutional Research is [Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative](#) (CITI) certified.

#### 2.E.2

Research and scholarly practice are supported by tutoring services offered through the [Student Success Center](#) and academic support through materials and instruction provided by the [Reid Memorial Library](#). Reid Memorial Library participates in the [Consortium of College and Research Libraries](#) in Illinois (CARLI) which is one of the premiere library consortia in the United States with membership requirements regarding [collection expenditures](#) and [professional staffing](#). In addition to the print and digital collections offered by Reid Memorial Library, a [Digital Commons](#) has been created for providing access to the intellectual output of L&C team members and students.

L&C provides a [stipend](#) for faculty with an earned doctorate to pursue independent research projects.

#### 2.E.3

Students are given guidance on the ethical use of information resources through a variety of communications and educational settings. Faculty routinely discuss ethical research practices for classroom assignments. L&C librarians provide information to equip students and team members with the skills needed to begin the [research process](#), identify [scholarly resources](#), and the use of [Open Educational Resources](#) (OERs).

In addition to face-to-face and phone support, L&C librarians can be contacted via [chat and text](#). L&C leverages its data warehouse to [count students](#) that attend a library instruction class or ask a reference question. These data have been used to investigate the correlation between library use and student success which culminated in an article that was published in the journal [Evidence Based Library and Information Practice](#) in 2018.

L&C is committed to providing students with the skills necessary to ethically use information in an effort to achieve academic success. Student Success Center tutors support students in helping them understand how to avoid plagiarism. Tutors and research librarians work with students to guide them on the ethical use of information resources through their research projects.

#### 2.E.4

L&C maintains a [Student Conduct Code](#) that details expectations of student behavior, penalties for violation of policies, and the process by which a student may appeal penalties. Penalties for violation of the policies for academic integrity and honesty are referred to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and may include punishments including a failing grade and up to and including expulsion.

The Student Conduct Code addresses a wide range of potential actions or behaviors that may be contrary to ethical and responsible conduct. These include, but are not limited to, actual or attempted cheating, plagiarism, forgery, falsification of any information as part of an academic exercise, or obtaining or distributing a test bank, test questions or other test materials before a test is administered, unless expressly approved in advance by the faculty member.

Other sections of the Code address the use of computers or data to commit forgery, violate confidentiality, or access confidential or copyright protected materials. L&C team members regularly reinforce these policies to students and hold them accountable in the classroom and elsewhere on campus. The Student Conduct Code is published annually in the [Course Catalog](#), and is posted on the College website.

Faculty develop a customized syllabus/course outline for the courses they teach. Students either receive an electronic copy or a hard copy from their instructor at the beginning of the course. The [outlines](#) are more specific about the faculty member's application of the Student Conduct Code with respect to academic dishonesty. Faculty in some programs may give the student an F on a paper or test. Other faculty in selective programs might remove a student from the program if they are found in violation of academic dishonesty.

Many L&C Faculty utilize a plagiarism checking software known as [Turnitin](#), which allows a faculty member to upload a written assignment and check it for any potentially plagiarized passages.

Most of the Health Science programs, such as Nursing, have also developed Policy and Procedure manuals specific to the academic expectations of the respective program. The [Nursing Policy Manual](#) specifies that a student will fail the course if they are discovered cheating or plagiarizing. Two course failures result in expulsion from the Nursing program.

All student disciplinary actions related to academic dishonesty are also communicated to the Dean and/or the Vice President of Academic Affairs, per the [Student Conduct Code](#).

With the increase in online courses, and more importantly during COVID-19 when all instruction was virtual, the College adopted two software programs to discourage and prevent cheating on exams. The first is [Respondus Lockdown Browser](#). This is a custom browser that locks down the exam environment within Blackboard. When it is being used during an online exam, the student is unable to go to other URLs, switch applications, take screen shots, copy exam questions, or print. The second is [Respondus Monitor](#). It works with Respondus Lockdown Browser and uses the webcam to prevent cheating during online exams. The exam is recorded and warnings are given when students look off camera or other suspicious actions.

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## 2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

### Summary

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

The argument and documentation presented here demonstrates L&C's commitment to all core components of Criterion 2. Responsibility and Integrity are not just core values of L&C, they are reflected in the institutional policies and daily procedures. Stakeholders of the College act in an ethical manner and are held accountable to standards of integrity and responsibility. The College has clear policies and processes in place for addressing any issues of ethical behavior that may arise. All team members are required to review and acknowledge established policies concerning ethical standards and behavior.

The institution represents itself clearly and completely to all constituents, and actively seeks feedback from the community to help inform decision-making.

Board members are elected at large from the district to represent the interests of all constituents of the College. They are well-informed on the issues facing the institution and receive opportunities for additional training and support to help guide their decision-making for the institution.

The Board of Trustees maintains a clear role of institutional oversight, but delegates the day-to-day operations of the College to the President. The Vice President of Academic Affairs oversees the daily participation of the College's faculty in the academic process.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*

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

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

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

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

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

### Argument

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#### 3.A.1

L&C provides high quality [academic programs](#) that are appropriate to higher education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered: on the main campus, at satellite locations, by distance delivery, and as [dual credit](#). New courses and programs undergo a [rigorous review process](#) beginning with the [Academic Affairs Committee](#) (AAC), followed by the [Curriculum and Instruction Committee](#) (CIC) (an institutional committee whose voting members are predominantly faculty), and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), and in the case of new programs, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Every five years the College conducts a "Recognition" self-study and prepares a report demonstrating compliance with state standards for courses and programs as defined in the [ICCB Administrative Rules](#). This is followed by a desk audit conducted by an ICCB team to affirm compliance. L&C was last [certified "in compliance"](#) in January 2021.

Every approved [course syllabus](#) is located in a master course [syllabus database](#) available through a link on the L&C website and accessible by both internal and external constituencies, including students and their families. Course descriptions are also available in the College Catalog. Courses designed to transfer must be [articulated with at least three senior institutions](#) before being approved by the ICCB. In addition, L&C is a member of the [Illinois Articulation Initiative](#) (IAI) in which certain transfer courses are further scrutinized for applicability in a statewide system of [general education core curriculum courses](#) and discipline-specific major courses.

Course-level assessment at L&C is an annual requirement for all full-time faculty. Individual courses are assessed as part of the faculty [Annual Performance Objectives](#) (APO) process, and these assessments are integrated into program assessments as a quality measure. The [APO process](#) provides the framework for faculty to report their planned student learning assessment objectives and methods in the beginning of the academic year, with a report of the results in the following year.

In fall 2020, APOs were replaced by the [Faculty Annual Reflection](#) (FAR) process. This change was the result of faculty input as well as the research around the impact of faculty reflection on meeting performance objectives. The FAR process is very similar to the APO process, but is less prescriptive in the reporting. [Every full-time faculty member is engaged annually](#) and in a continuous manner in student learning assessment and course evaluation. Some [faculty work in teams](#) to address research questions related to student learning outcomes in their discipline and/or across disciplines.

[Program-Level Assessment](#) is led by program coordinators (PCs) annually. There are four key elements that

comprise program-level assessment: 1) program-level outcomes 2) success rates for courses 3) course-level assessment and 4) general education assessment. Program-level outcomes are set by a CTE program coordinator for students in the CTE program of study. These outcomes are reviewed annually and are modified as needed to address environmental changes. Course success rates allow a program coordinator to assess how students are progressing in a program. Success is defined at L&C as a grade of A, B or C, and failure is defined as a grade of D, F, or W. [General education assessment](#) identifies where general education assessment rubrics – writing, speaking, teamwork, diversity awareness, math reasoning, and critical thinking – are embedded within the courses of a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program. Rubrics are used to score criteria on a five-point scale.

L&C's Program Review follows the ICCB's Program Review process as described in the [ICCB Program Review Manual](#). At five-year intervals, each program (academic or career, and student services) undergoes a formal program review to affirm program need, quality, and cost-effectiveness against ICCB established criteria. For ICCB program review, there are approximately 45 elements that are required to be reported by faculty program coordinators. These elements include unit costs, labor market demand, recruitment, enrollment, course success rates, completions, and other measures. Also, all program master syllabi should be updated every 5 years. The preparation for the comprehensive program review is a ten-month process, beginning in May and ending in February. The program review calendar was changed to align with the College's budget process. The culmination of this work is a 30-minute presentation by faculty/staff coordinators to administrators, deans, and other faculty, with time allotted for questions and answers. The results of this review, for example the [Dental Hygiene program review](#), can be used to support budgetary considerations and planning and are often the basis for [program improvements](#).

Every [career program](#) has an [advisory committee](#) comprised of local employers in that particular career field, as well as high school representatives, faculty, and alumni of the program. This group provides advice and counsel to ensure that the program and its courses continue to be relevant and meet the needs and expectations of regional employers. Each program meets with their advisory group at least twice a year to discuss curriculum, equipment needs, budgets, and employment outlook. The new [Fire Science Academy](#) is the result of input from the [Fire Science Advisory Committee](#).

Four-year colleges and universities that accept transferring students from L&C are major stakeholders in the quality and rigor of L&C programs and courses. Many L&C programs are subject to transfer agreements in which the student completes the first two years of a baccalaureate program at L&C and the final two at a four-year institution (i.e., [transfer agreements](#)). This allows students to attend the first two years at L&C and provides a seamless transition for transfer to the four-year institution. Additionally, students are able to be [dually enrolled](#) at both institutions, offering them an accelerated completion of a baccalaureate degree.

As part of the College's commitment to ongoing assessment of program need, quality, and cost-effectiveness through program review, program coordinators and other faculty regularly communicate with four-year colleges and universities to stay abreast of curriculum changes that affect [transfer](#). Advisors are appropriately informed when such changes occur and again at meetings with representatives from L&C and transfer colleges and universities. L&C advisors also attend annual conferences at various regional institutions throughout Illinois and metropolitan St. Louis, where recent and planned changes are discussed and other important information is exchanged.

The IAI continually monitors designated transfer courses to ensure that the learning objectives meet state [IAI standards](#). Institutions with courses that are rejected by [IAI panels](#) are given an opportunity to revise the courses and resubmit for approval. L&C also participates in the state's web-based *U-Select* transfer service sponsored by the IAI and also accessible from the *itransfer.org* web page. Using this service, students can upload their L&C transcript to see how closely their courses meet the program requirements in a particular Illinois four-year college or university.

Program quality is also monitored and maintained through [outside accreditations](#) and /or licensures. For example, L&C's Health Science Programs are currently accredited by the [American Dental Association – Commission on Dental Accreditation \(ADA-CODA\)](#), [Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc. \(ACEN\)](#), the [Committee on the Accreditation of Emergency Medical Services Professions \(CoAEMSP\)](#), [Accrediting Bureau of](#)

[Health Education Schools \(ABHES\)](#), [American Society of Health-System Pharmacists \(ASHP\)](#), and the [American Council for Occupational Therapy Education \(ACOTE\)](#). L&C's Auto Technology program is accredited and “master certified” through the National Institute for [Automotive Service Excellence \(ASE\)](#) reflecting the highest standards for quality in technician education and training. It should also be noted that L&C is authorized (License Number 510.000057) by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, Division of Professional Regulation, to confer real estate licenses.

Some programs employ standardized tests or practicums to help prepare their students for licensure exams. L&C's nursing program uses a standardized HESI (Health Education Systems Inc.) exam throughout the course of the program both as a requirement for graduation and to prepare students for the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX). All nursing students take a review course provided by Elsevier prior to graduation. In addition, all health sciences students (nursing, dental assistant and dental hygiene, occupational therapy assistant) complete lab/clinical practicums to assure strong clinical skills. A long history of [successful pass rates](#) for these exams is testimony to the effectiveness of these methods.

### 3.A.2

L&C clearly articulates and differentiates its learning outcomes for undergraduate degrees and certificate programs. The College offers [five undergraduate transfer degrees](#): Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Art (AA), Associate in Engineering Science (AES), Associate in General Studies (AGS) and Associate of Fine Arts (AFA). L&C also offers an [Associate of Applied Science \(AAS\) degree in career and occupational disciplines, and certificates of completion \(CC\) and proficiency \(CP\)](#). The academic requirements, including prerequisites, and learning outcomes for each of these AAS programs are clearly outlined in the College catalog. The program-level assessment and program-level review processes require an examination of the program requirements, prerequisites, and learning outcomes. The catalog and course syllabi are available on the College website. [Transfer degree programs](#) are designed to provide a seamless transition for students who plan to continue their education at four-year institutions. Curricula in these degree programs align closely with general education requirements for the second two years of a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. Students are sometimes required or strongly encouraged to complete the IAI general education requirements while at L&C. This approach allows students to explore different degree track options and mature intellectually before making a final decision about a major field of study.

The [Associate of Applied Science \(AAS\) degree](#) is designed to enable graduates to enter occupations with marketable skills that include both technical and general education core skills, and in some cases, to successfully transfer to baccalaureate programs in four-year colleges and universities. This serves employers' needs for individuals who are not only technically skilled but well-rounded in fundamental skills such as oral and written communications, math reasoning and critical thinking. In recent years, some four-year colleges and universities have developed [transfer agreements](#) for many of L&C's AAS degree programs, including Exercise Science, Fire Science, Process Operations Technology, Automotive Technology, and Nursing. Students who elect to pursue these course sequences at L&C can then transfer seamlessly into baccalaureate programs at the four-year institutions.

Programs leading to a [Certificate of Proficiency \(CP\)](#) require 30-50 credit hours of course work which concentrates on the skills and knowledge needed for a particular career or vocation. Although some general education courses may be required, most of the students' time and focus is in the career subject area. A CP is appropriate for students who are interested in upgrading job skills or acquiring new skills as rapidly as possible to improve employability or advance in their current careers.

Programs leading to a [Certificate of Completion \(CC\)](#) require 29 credit hours or less of coursework. These programs target students seeking to acquire the minimum skills needed for an entry-level job in a particular field or occupation. They also serve the needs of those who simply want to improve their technical and professional skills to advance their careers.

### 3.A.3

In both quality and design, academic programs and courses offered at L&C are consistent across all delivery

[modes](#) and locations. This includes courses taught online, face-to-face, or some combination of the two. Whether conducted on the main campus or another off-campus location; or through the dual credit program, the instructional content and performance expectations are the same. This consistency is monitored and maintained through the use of [common syllabi](#) and the program assessment process. All faculty, whether full- or part-time, use the same [officially approved syllabus](#) from the master course syllabus database for the particular course they are teaching. All instructors must meet the minimum requirements for [educational credentials](#), whether in the dual credit program, teaching online courses, full-time, or part-time. Many courses have common final exams that are given to every student who takes that course regardless of how the course was delivered or by whom.

L&C offers the following modes of instruction:

- Traditional face-to-face (TF)
- Online - asynchronous (WW)
- Web-blended (WB)

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the College added the following:

- Virtual class meetings - synchronous (VCM)
- Virtual blended class - synchronous (VBC)
- Blendflex - virtual, and/or face-to-face - synchronous (BF)

Courses instructed as WB, VBC, and BF are a combination of face-to-face and web-enabled instruction. For example, some lab science courses are web-blended so that the labs are taught face-to-face and the lecture portion is taught online. Some speech courses are also taught this way with students attending class to give and observe oral presentations while receiving online instruction for other portions of the class. In this context it should be noted that “distance education” courses to students who may be out-of-state are governed by federal regulations. These require state approval of courses and a written declaration to the affected states that L&C “does not advertise, announce, or promote its distance education courses/programs, solicit students for enrollment in its distance education courses/programs, or have a physical presence” in that particular state.

All asynchronous modes of instruction are reviewed using a common [course design checklist](#) developed by the [Technology Enhanced Learning Committee](#) (TELC). The checklist was created to support the process of a self-review of an online or web-blended course. Criteria included in the checklist were based on a 2010 literature review and were primarily adapted from the University of Maryland Online FIPSE Project: [Quality Matters](#) and the Illinois Online Network [Quality Online Course Initiative \(QOCI\)](#). The process of reviewing online and web-blended courses follows a three-year cycle. Revision of the checklist occurs annually to reflect changes in policies and in the learning management system. The checklist represents and ensures that each course meets the College’s quality standards. Moreover, online and web-blended course review ensures that course content and quality is consistent with face-to-face courses, and that online students are held to the same academic standards as face-to-face students. Once the teaching faculty member is satisfied that they have addressed the checklist, their course is reviewed by an experienced online instructor who is a member of TELC. The results are sent to the Director of Technology Enhanced Learning who also reviews the course and then provides the instructor with feedback based on this initial review. Subsequent mentorship and support are also offered to help the instructor make any needed changes in the course. In addition, faculty who want to teach online or web-blended courses are required to successfully complete [EDTR 266, Implementing Blackboard Learn](#) and, once every three years, must complete a refresher workshop demonstrating best practices and knowledge of Blackboard updates. This work aligns with [Key Direction 2, Aspiration 1](#) in the Strategic Plan.

L&C was [approved by HLC](#) to offer our welding technology AAS in a competency-based education (CBE) mode in spring semester of 2022. CBE allows students agility through courses and programs based on ability to master skills or competency at their own pace. This method is tailored to meet different learning styles and expectations. The mode can lead to more efficient student outcomes and increased retention. L&C is committed to increasing access to education and we plan to expand our utilization of CBE. L&C faculty and administration are actively seeking institutions with successful CBE programs in order to gain insight and to learn best practices. With this evolving knowledge, a common framework can be developed and shared across community colleges in Illinois to

broaden access and increase both enrollment and retention.

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## 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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

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

### Argument

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#### 3.B.1

L&C provides general education instruction as an integral component of all degree programs and some certificate programs. This is consistent with the [College's commitment](#) to the exercise of [intellectual inquiry](#) and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills in its educational programs.

The Illinois (transferable) [General Education Core Curriculum \(GECC\)](#) is divided into five categories: Communications, Mathematics, Physical and Life Sciences, Humanities and Fine Arts, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. Successful completion of GECC courses facilitates transfer to any [Illinois Articulation Initiative \(IAI\)](#) participating associate or baccalaureate degree program in Illinois, which includes all public and most private colleges and universities. In order to complete the GECC, students must take at least 12 to 13 courses (37 to 41 GECC credits). The specific GECC courses required for each degree program are listed in the College Catalog and all such courses have a formally approved syllabus, which list the intended learning objectives for each course. These syllabi are located in the [master database](#).

#### 3.B.2

The GECC is based on the IAI framework for general education, which is echoed in the philosophical framework of the L&C [general education assessment process](#). L&C has a thorough and time-tested assessment [process for general education](#). This process is led by the [six-member GEAC](#) (General Education Assessment Committee). The six members are the faculty leads for each of the six general education outcomes. Through this committee and participating "partner" faculty, the College conducts ongoing general education assessments using [common rubrics](#) for each of the general education outcomes. Faculty members across disciplines are engaged in the embedded testing of general education competencies. In this environment, faculty teaching general education courses and the GEAC lead faculty often function as teams, meeting regularly to discuss course content and assessment findings, and to explore potential actions to improve student learning. In addition, general education assessment has become an embedded part of the program-level assessment process. The [webpage](#) for the GEAC includes related information about the GECC, including a description of the general education outcomes, examples of [assessment rubrics](#), [user guide](#), [annual reports](#), and other related information.

The GEAC committee charge is to: a) review and implement the College's plan for the assessment of general education learning; b) collect and analyze general education assessment data and make recommendations on improvement of student learning; c) evaluate the assessment process annually and make recommendations for

improvement of the process; and d) propose actions to improve learning and/or the assessment process itself based on findings from the annual assessment.

Over a number of years of research and experimentation, six outcomes emerged as the key measures for student learning in the general education core courses:

1. Written Communication – effective skill in writing by creating a thesis and organizing argument with support, as well as editing and revising for clarity and critical thinking.
2. Oral Communication – effective skill in recognizing and employing criteria in formal speech presentations, including both verbal and nonverbal techniques, to enhance delivery.
3. Critical Thinking - effective skill in articulating and evaluating arguments using both deductive and inductive reasoning, utilizing rudimentary principles of the scientific method, and applying these skills to problem solving. Components include: reasoning (inferential discourse and scientific reasoning), and practical problem solving.
4. Mathematical Reasoning - effective skill in basic mathematical computation and comprehension of quantitative information, including application in a variety of situations. Components include: number sense, statistics, and applied math.
5. Teamwork Skills - effective skill in self-understanding as evidenced by such traits as self-control, personal integrity and responsibility, and skill in associating with others as evidenced by such traits as tolerance, empathy, and awareness of common goals. Components include self-knowledge, and knowledge of others.
6. Diversity Awareness - effective skill in identifying, appreciating, and describing the interdependencies and conflicts of the global community on national, regional, local and/or personal levels. Components include similarities, connection, and differences.

Every degree program offered by the institution has general education core requirements that engage students in some level of research, analysis, and communication. In addition, each career program requires GECC courses that are specific to that career discipline. As the general education outcomes illustrate, the GECC is designed to nurture foundational skills such as critical thinking, math reasoning, and effective oral and written communications. These are skills that can be adapted to changing environments and establish a foundation for lifelong learning. The [curriculum development process](#) is also designed to ensure that, where appropriate, courses include [research assignments](#), [oral presentations](#), group projects, and other activities that help build and establish these foundational skills. Most career programs culminate in [capstone internship](#) experiences as well.

### 3.B.3

L&C's educational offerings recognize the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and will likely work. For example, the “Diversity Awareness” GEAC outcome is defined as:

*Effective skill in identifying, appreciating, and describing the interdependencies and conflicts of the global community on national, regional, local, and / or personal levels. Components include: identify, compare, contrast, and appreciate.*

And, the “Teamwork Skills” outcome is defined as:

*Effective skill in self-understanding as evidenced by such traits as self-control, personal integrity, and responsibility, and skill in associating with others as evidenced by such traits as tolerance, empathy, and awareness of common goals. Components include: self-knowledge and knowledge of other.*

In 2022, L&C drafted a [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(DEI\) Blueprint](#) that will update the existing [diversity plan](#), which was updated and revised in 2016. It includes a policy statement formally approved by the Board of Trustees. This statement concludes as follows:

*Lewis and Clark Community College is committed to creating and nurturing a culture that prioritizes diversity, equity, inclusive excellence, and anti-racism. We encourage and embrace the diversity of our Team Members race, religion, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identification, ability status, socio-economic status, national identity, ancestry, age, marital status, veteran status,*

*citizenship status, or any other protected group status. We are committed to building an environment where underrepresented populations have equal access to resources and opportunities to learn and grow.*

*All Team Members have a responsibility to display conduct that reflects DEI and Anti-Racism while representing Lewis and Clark Community College. All Team Members are required to attend and complete annual diversity awareness training to enhance their knowledge to fulfill this responsibility.*

*Our DEI Blueprint enables us to foster our culture of diversity, equity, inclusive excellence, and anti-racism, build a community and develop lifelong learners that reflect the diverse communities we serve, and infuse DEI and Anti-Racism into all areas of our institution.*

The DEI Blueprint references five objectives that set priorities in alignment with L&C's [2022-2025 Strategic Plan](#). This DEI Blueprint seeks to affirm the L&C Mission Statement and Core Values.

The faculty led [Diversity Council](#) continues to be [very active](#) in sponsoring and promoting activities designed to realize these objectives. Faculty are encouraged to incorporate diversity themes in the curriculum and this effort continues to be promoted and facilitated through collaboration with the GEAC faculty lead in [Diversity Awareness](#). The [GECC](#) curriculum includes many courses that are centered on or in important ways address non-western themes and traditions. These include courses such as: [Comparative Religions](#), [Literature of Non-Western Cultures](#), [Non-Western Music](#), [Geography by World Regions](#), and [World History](#).

L&C's district is spread out and largely rural, but it also includes suburban areas in the cities of Godfrey, Alton, East Alton, and Edwardsville. Health sciences and teacher education students often participate in clinical and other instructional settings where they come in contact with individuals from diverse racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Teacher Education majors must complete a course on [Diversity in Today's Schools](#) and also serve forty hours of classroom assistance time in schools that have a high proportion of racial/ethnic minority students and students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Clinical experiences include working with diverse populations through the Madison County Urban League, Head Start, the Alton Boys and Girls Club, local schools and similar agencies. Health Science students are evaluated on [professionalism](#) standards that can include empathy as demonstrated by rendering assistance to all individuals without bias or prejudice, and interpersonal skills that demonstrate sensitivity and respect to individuals regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, religious, and ethnic/cultural backgrounds. These students are also involved in campus and community health fairs, dental screenings, and [COVID-19 vaccination clinics](#).

The College's commitment to access and opportunity extends to those with developmental disabilities as well. Students with developmental, physical, or emotional disabilities receive services through the [Center for Access and Accommodations](#) (CAA) and two hallmark programs: [Supported College Transition \(SCT\)](#) and [College for Life \(CFL\)](#). These programs provide a variety of support services for students with developmental, learning, neurological, hearing, visual, mobility, and emotional disabilities. SCT provides support for students transitioning to college programs. CFL provides students with educational, social, and lifelong learning experiences on a college campus and in the community.

The effects of climate change and the critical importance of environmental justice are reflected as a wider commitment to environmental sustainability across the College. The [Green Oversight Committee](#) engages students and team members in the development and implementation of sustainability initiatives that were inspired and guided by L&C's formal commitments to state and national organizations. L&C's educational role and responsibility is articulated in the [Climate Action Plan](#).

The National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC), a division of the College, is home to the [Swarovski Waterschool](#), the first and only of its kind in North America. The primary goal of this program is to educate people living alongside the Mississippi River about the human connection to and reliance on healthy and functioning river ecosystems. The program follows three interconnected core principles that focus on educating children and communities on sustainable water management, sanitation, and providing water and sanitation facilities.

### 3.B.4

College team members and students engage in research and the discovery of knowledge on several fronts. All full-time faculty and many adjuncts conduct assessments at one or more levels: [classroom](#), [course](#), or [program](#). Many full-time faculty do all three. By definition these involve research, analysis, and synthesis of ideas that develop into recommended actions to improve student learning and/or program quality. Academic Affairs team members meet regularly with various committees (e.g., Technology Enhanced Learning Committee and Curriculum and Instruction Committee) to share information in an integrated fashion and to participate in making evidence-based decisions regarding curriculum, technology, and programs. Every semester during [in-service week](#), faculty attend presentations and workshops for professional development. As a part of their [EDTR 279 Program Assessment](#) coursework, all program coordinators are required to discuss strengths and weaknesses based on data tied to their program. The College's website remains an indispensable tool for sharing information and transmitting knowledge.

L&C benefits from the creative work from our students. L&C's literary magazine, the [Peppermint Rooster Review](#), is full of outstanding short stories, poems and creative nonfiction essays from our students, current and former. [The Bridge](#) is the student newspaper of L&C. The paper, produced entirely by students, has won numerous [awards](#) and is also available online. [WLCA 89.9-FM](#), L&C's award-winning radio station, gives students first-hand experience in a real broadcasting environment and offers the community a great musical outlet. The students have recently begun creating Podcasts as well. Art faculty and student exhibits are held each year to showcase the impressive amount of talent located right here on L&C's campus. The "[You Have A Voice!](#)" speech competition, sponsored by [Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society](#) is an opportunity for L&C students to share their heartfelt stories and thoughts on what it means to be human. There are a variety of [music ensembles and performances](#) by team members and students. Graphic design students compete to design [new logos](#) for community businesses as well as programs on campus. Dual credit high school students compete in [trebuchet competitions](#) that also include computer-aided drafting competitions. The L&C [Honors College](#) provides an opportunity for students with outstanding potential to enhance their college experience through honors courses, service and social opportunities, and undergraduate research. The Honors College holds an [annual exposition](#), during which students showcase their culminating humanities research projects in the form of interactive exhibits and demonstrations. The [St. Louis Confluence Fab Lab](#) at L&C exchanges knowledge, ideas and resources to collectively empower people of all ages and backgrounds to experiment and invent new products to solve real world problems at local, national, and global levels. It can serve educators in need of a lab space for courses, inventors needing to prototype a design, clubs needing to produce something tangible, businesses needing to produce a part for verification and fit, and individuals wanting to build but unable to buy the necessary tools.

Team members are working together on a [number of initiatives](#) that address student success in general, specifically [retention, persistence, and completion rates](#). Each initiative involves research and experimentation on [methods of instruction](#) and [student learning support methods](#) designed to improve student success. Some of these involve implementation of contextualized learning, modularized courses, proactive and "intrusive" advising (i.e., intervention-based advising), and [co-requisite remediation](#). In fall 2016, L&C began offering co-requisite remediation in four math pathways and two English pathways. The four math pathways include College Algebra, Statistics, General Education Math, and Technical Math. The two English pathways include College Composition and Technical Writing. L&C was part of the original Complete College America Cohort in 2016. More recently, L&C initiated [Competency Based Education \(CBE\)](#) and Blendflex into the curriculum and will be analyzing the data collected.

The Student Success Center offers [tutoring services](#) in nine sites on campus in areas such as writing, math, social science, communication skills, and general academic support. The Student Success Team tracks instructional initiatives being piloted at L&C.

The current 2022-2025 [Faculty Agreement](#) contains a [Teaching and Engagement Model](#) (TEM) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). In this pilot program, faculty members can use a portion of their required contact hours to strengthen, increase access to, or expand their program. This could be through incorporating Blendflex, Hyflex, or CBE into their program pathway or developing new certificates or recruiting plans. TEM offers faculty members a framework to balance teaching and engagement for betterment and advancement of respective programs and student support structures.

Another new initiative within the Faculty Agreement is the [doctoral stipend](#). Faculty with a doctorate can receive 3 hours of release time per academic year to engage in scholarly work outside the classroom.

[The National Great Rivers Research and Education Center \(NGRREC\)](#) is an innovative center for research and teaching located near the confluence of the Mississippi, Missouri and Illinois rivers. Developed through a partnership between L&C and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, NGRREC is situated in a unique position near a relatively unstudied yet significant ecosystem created by the confluence of the three rivers. Its goal is to explore important questions about the rivers, the environment, and the impact on the communities, as well as to keep the public informed on such issues and related efforts. NGRREC annually showcases summer intern and team member research at their Neighbor Nights events.

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## 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

### Argument

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#### 3.C.1

The L&C [team members reflect human diversity](#) as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves. The Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (L&C policy number 506) states:

*In accordance with applicable law, L&C ensures equal opportunities are offered in the employment of individuals regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, color, creed or religion, national origin, disability, age, marital status, military status, sexual orientation, and other protected categories. Any inquiries, complaints or grievances concerning this policy may be made to the Director of Human Resources, the Vice President of Administration, or the College President or his/her designee.*

This strive for diversity is also supported by the creation of the [Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Excellence](#) in 2021. It is also echoed in the third objective of the [Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Excellence \(DEI\) Blueprint](#) which states, "Strengthen recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and retention practices which address and advance DEI."

L&C is also diverse in the credentials held by the full-time faculty members. Of the 90 current faculty members, 16 have doctorate degrees (18%), 64 have Master's degrees (71%), 9 have Bachelor's degrees (10%), and 1 has an AAS degree (1%).

The community L&C serves is made up of 50.9% females and 49.1% males. The team members of L&C are 60% female and 40% male. The College also has faculty serving non-traditional gender roles, for example three male nursing faculty members.

#### 3.C.2

L&C consistently maintains sufficient numbers of high caliber team members needed to fulfill the mission. Over the past 10 years, L&C's student-to-faculty ratio dropped from [1:26 to 1:15](#), and the percentage of credits taught by full-time faculty increased from [45% to 64%](#). Over these years, there has been a strong continuity of experienced faculty members able to perform both classroom and non-classroom roles and responsibilities. This includes oversight of existing curriculum, new curriculum development, classroom instruction, office hours,



student advising, learning assessment, committee participation, and coaching of new faculty. L&C currently has [90 full-time faculty and 181 adjunct faculty](#).

Among the professional duties of full-time faculty members is the participation in College-wide [institutional committees](#). These are as follows (in alphabetical order): Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), Commencement Committee (COMMC), Curriculum and Instruction Committee (CIC), Diversity Council (DC), Financial Aid Committee (FAC), General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC), Green Oversight Committee (GOC), Health and Life Safety Committee (HLS), Honors Committee (HONC), New Faculty Roundtable (NRF), Technology Enhance Learning Committee (TELC), Rank and Promotions Committee (RPC), and Wellness Committee. Faculty also regularly serve on *ad hoc* committees, such as those involved in the Student Success Team, Self-Study for Reaccreditation, and the Strategic Planning Steering Committees.

### 3.C.3

[Faculty credentials](#) meet established standards for post-secondary instruction, including [dual credit](#) instruction. Faculty teaching academic transfer courses have completed a Master's degree with at least 18 graduate hours in the discipline area. Career and Technical faculty have a degree in the discipline, 2,000 hours of industry experience, and/or industry-credential or certification that qualifies them with technical expertise. The same credentials are required for both L&C faculty as well as dual credit faculty. L&C's hiring policies and practices are designed to attract highly qualified candidates. Management practices are designed to retain the best team members and help them "grow" personally and professionally. L&C's CETL committee provides workshops and courses to support professional development. All instructors are held to the same professional standards whether they are full-time or part-time, and whatever their teaching mode or program (i.e., face-to-face, online, web-blended, or dual credit programs). The College also credentials faculty to teach online classes. Online instructors are required to complete EDTR 266 Implementing Blackboard Learn every 3 years to ensure they are competent and aware of all new updates to the learning management system and online teaching.

### 3.C.4

Full-time faculty members complete [Annual Performance Objectives](#) (APOs) which currently have been revised into [Faculty Annual Reflections](#) (FARs). Both processes begin with the faculty member assessing student learning from the previous year and summarizing the findings in their APO/FAR. This is then sent to the appropriate dean, moves on to a collective review by the academic deans and the VPAA, and concludes with a one-on-one review involving the faculty member and her/his dean. In these personal reviews, the deans may offer suggestions to improve the previous year's performance or next year's plans or offer advice related to personal and professional development in the coming year.

Faculty and administration also have an opportunity to review the results of [student end-of-course evaluations](#). These results are shared with the deans and VPAA and may be discussed between the dean and the faculty member. Pre-tenured (probationary) full-time faculty are [observed in the classroom](#) by their dean at least once every semester. Faculty eligible for promotion are also observed in the classroom by their deans. The results of these observations are discussed by the dean and faculty member. Adjuncts are also observed by program coordinators.

Faculty teaching online and web-blended (asynchronously taught) courses are required to complete an online course design review using [a standard quality checklist](#) to ensure that their courses are consistent with common standards and sufficiently challenge the student. New online courses are reviewed by a committee of faculty peers from the [TELC](#). This occurs before the course is taught if the faculty member is a new online instructor, and after the course is taught if the faculty member is an experienced online instructor. All asynchronously taught courses are reviewed every three years by the TELC subcommittee. One of the requirements of the checklist is mandated student feedback to assist with continuing efforts to improve the quality of programs and courses. The feedback mechanism may make use of [Classroom Assessment Techniques \(CATS\)](#), blogs, anonymous surveys, email, or other methods.

### 3.C.5

At L&C, professional development is a responsibility that is shared by the College and the individual. Every team member is encouraged to work with their dean to develop a personalized development plan with both short- and long-term goals. These are easily integrated into the faculty's APO/FAR process. To support professional development financially, each division or department (academic and non-academic) has an annual conference/meeting [expense account](#). The funds in this account can be used for professional development of team members as needed. In addition, the [Carl Perkins Grant](#) supports professional development for faculty in career programs. CETL also funds professional development activities through resources provided jointly by the College and the Faculty Association.

The College also offers professional development opportunities through free EDTR (Education and Training) and [CEFD \(Continuing Education Faculty Development\)](#) courses. These courses count toward promotion in rank as credit hours "beyond the master's degree." Team members also have at their disposal thousands of journals, books, and articles via extensive databases available through the [Reid Memorial Library](#). All new full-time faculty are required to take part in the year-long institutional committee of New Faculty Roundtable to gain an orientation to the College. They also complete the [EDTR 268 Learner Centered Instruction](#) course to learn active learning strategies for the classroom.

On a formal or informal basis, deans, administrators, and senior faculty often provide mentoring and coaching to help team members advance their personal and professional careers. Team members represent the College at [professional conferences](#) and have on several occasions presented on subjects as varied as assessment methods and models, strategic planning, and student success initiatives. Faculty often play a lead role in identifying grant opportunities, helping to write compelling grant proposals, and serving in some capacity on project teams. L&C has been exceptionally successful in winning [state, federal, and private grants](#), and this can largely be attributed to the hard work and close collaboration of team members, which has had a major positive impact on College programs. The [2022-2025 negotiated faculty agreement](#) allows for faculty to be granted professional development leave (sabbatical). A [faculty member](#) is currently [on sabbatical](#) to complete his doctoral studies.

### 3.C.6

As governed by the 2022-2025 negotiated [Faculty Agreement](#), all L&C faculty members, with the concurrence of the appropriate Academic Administrator, shall demonstrate five days of engagement. Faculty will be expected to outline their preferred mode of private communication on the course syllabus. Faculty response time for answering student questions should be within forty-eight (48) hours five out of seven days, except for holidays and recesses. Faculty must be physically present on an L&C campus or center a minimum of 7.5 hours per week. All faculty have campus phone numbers with voicemail, and campus email addresses. In addition, all courses have Blackboard "shells" (i.e., templates) that faculty may use to communicate with students within the campus network or via the internet.

### 3.C.7

Our [hiring policies and practices](#) and our team member management and development practices are designed to ensure that we hire highly qualified student support staff with the appropriate experience and credentials. Each department offers internal training as well as provides funding support for [annual professional conferences](#) for team members. These various training opportunities keep them updated on policies, procedures, compliance, and various federal and state regulatory changes. There are also departmental retreats that offer team building opportunities. Departmental managers meet each semester to share announcements and information that are taken back and shared with team members in individual departments. All new Student Success Center tutors must complete [EDTR 290 - Tutor Training](#). During [in-service week](#) each fall and spring semester, workshops are offered to provide training in a variety of areas. CETL workshops that are held throughout the year are always open to all team members. Other topics such as [legal compliance](#) are presented annually to all team members. Academic advisors [meet monthly](#) to discuss issues relevant to the enrollment and advising of students and to keep current on any program changes. The College had a higher than average turnover rate in the enrollment and advising department over the last several years. This led to a loss of institutional knowledge and at times, mistakes in advising. To remedy this, Human Resources enlisted the Gallagher consultants to perform a [classification and compensation study](#). This led to an acknowledgement that many of our advising and enrollment team were below

the minimum for compensation for their classification. This was corrected, with the aim of increasing team member retention and, ultimately, improving student enrollment and retention.

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## 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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

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

## Argument

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### 3.D.1

L&C provides a full range of academic, student support, and student life services. All team members may be involved in these services, especially academic services such as tutoring and advising. [Enrollment team members](#) provide assistance with admission and enrollment, transcript services, testing, financial aid, academic advising, and other functions. Services provided by other departments include: [Perkins support services](#), [services for students with disabilities](#), [veterans services](#), emergency loans, assistive technology lab, [career and employment services](#), and services provided through the [Student Success Center \(SSC\)](#). Students and team members are served through special programs of the [Wellness Committee](#) that promote healthy living and address substance abuse, eating disorders, smoking, and other harmful behaviors. Students also have access to a full-time mental health counselor and a 24/7 mental health counseling service, [BetterMynd](#). Student Services team members support [athletics](#), [student government](#), [student newspaper](#), and [student clubs](#) and social/special interest organizations. The College offers two programs for students with [developmental disabilities](#): College for Life, a non-credit program, and Supported College Transition for students who will progress to college-level courses with appropriate support.

### 3.D.2

The [Student Success Center \(SSC\)](#) is a collection of academic support services that are centrally coordinated, managed, and evaluated for quality and effectiveness. The [Math Resource Center \(MRC\) and the Math/Science STEM Center](#) are both located in the Math and Science Complex and staffed by full-time tutors, part-time tutors, and student workers. The [Writing Desk](#), and [Academic Tutoring](#), are both located in [Reid Memorial Library](#) and staffed by full and part-time tutors. Writing lab help is also offered through the Online Paper Submission system. The [Communication Lab](#) is located in the Trimpe Advanced Technology Center and is staffed by part-time faculty who also work as tutors. [Social Science tutoring](#) is also provided by adjunct faculty in Baldwin Hall. As an extension of the Student Support Center, Nursing and Dental Hygiene students can receive tutoring from team members in their respective buildings.

L&C's academic placement process is designed to accurately assess and place students in academic work for which they are adequately prepared to succeed. L&C team members utilize [multiple measures](#) including both past student records and, when appropriate GPA, ACT, SAT, and [ACCUPLACER](#) in their assessments of incoming students. In the process, they look at previous placement records and high school- or college-level transcripts, and conduct personal interviews with students. [Prior credit](#) from other institutions can also be used to place students in the appropriate classes.

Enrolled students who test into at least one developmental English, reading or math course are at particular risk of failing and dropping out before advancing to college-level work. The College has identified these students as a prime target for focused support through a [Complete College America \(CCA\) program](#) that was implemented in

fall 2016. CCA places some developmental students directly into college-level courses with additional support. [Preliminary data](#) suggested that CCA was working to accelerate students through college-level math and English courses. Based on the positive outcomes associated with co-requisite remediation, the College scaled up and institutionalized CCA in fall 2017.

### 3.D.3

All transfer and career students, whether new or returning, are assigned to an academic advisor and receive [academic advising](#) from professional and/or faculty advisors. Prospective students may also receive academic advising related to general information about the College. Additionally L&C provides students and the community access to [Career Coach](#), a district labor market analysis tool that is tied directly to College programs with both an interest inventory tool and a resume builder. Advisors assist students in developing an [education plan](#) that is best suited to their needs, interests, and abilities. Academic advisors are trained on all courses and degree programs offered by the College, including [GECC](#), [transfer degrees](#), and [career \(degree and certificate\) programs](#). Advisors are continually re-trained and updated on [articulation agreements](#) with [other colleges](#) and [universities](#). [Advisors meet monthly](#) to discuss any changes to the curriculum and degree programs at L&C and transfer institutions. In addition to course selection, advisors also contact students on their caseload in an effort to retain them and help them to graduate. Students are contacted by their advisors regarding tuition issues and/or course progress, which is [provided to advisors in a systematic way by faculty](#). Advisors attend professional development sessions to learn more about the profession and to further develop their interpersonal communications and other advising skills. After a review of advisor effectiveness, L&C instituted advising by academic program. L&C also employs "intrusive advising". Faculty send monitoring reports at the 25% and 50% points in the semester, and advisors reach out to students who are under-performing or have attendance issues.

### 3.D.4

L&C provides high quality infrastructure and facilities to support instructional and service-related activities. Classrooms are multi-media equipped with a computer, projector with speakers, and a document camera. In the wake of COVID-19, 60 classrooms have been upgraded to "Blendflex classrooms". These are equipped with an additional large screen monitor, an Owl video system that captures everything in the room with a 360 degree camera, microphone, and speakers. L&C has computer labs, science labs, a state-of-the-art welding facility, automotive labs, performance spaces, clinical practice rooms, and a dental clinic.

The health science programs (Nurse Assistant, Nursing, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Medical Assisting, and Paramedicine) have [agreements with clinics and hospitals](#) in both Illinois and Missouri for students to complete their required clinical experiences. The [Paul B. Hanks Dental Clinic](#) is utilized by both the Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene programs to treat both students and community members to meet the program required clinical experiences. The clinic will undergo a major renovation this summer, which will include replacement of the dental chairs and the cabinetry that contains the individual sinks and equipment.

The [Weber Workforce Center](#) was constructed in 2016. The \$4.5 million construction project was funded, in part, by a very generous donation from a community member, Ed Weber. With the addition of this building, welding course capacities doubled and state-of-the-art welding equipment and welding simulators were purchased to enhance the learning environment. This increase in capacity also now allows for high school students to be concurrently enrolled in welding courses.

Renovations to the Exercise Science facilities, with financial support from the College's Perkins Gant, have enhanced the student experience and allowed the program to better align with current industry standards. This upgrade in equipment, and assessment materials make a [transfer](#) from L&C's Exercise Science Program to Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville's Exercise Science Program seamless.

L&C's broadcasting program, whose students operate the 89.9 FM WLCA radio station, has also undergone a transformation. With a series of [studio upgrades](#), the program has expanded into audio and video podcasting. This facility improvement provides students expanded opportunities to learn skills to create digital, audio, and video content. The opportunity for students to train on the same professional level equipment similar to what they will see in their future workplaces gives them an edge over other job seekers.

L&C offers a variety of performance spaces for music students, including [the Hatheway Cultural Center](#), the Ringhausen Music Building, and the Chapel. L&C is designated an “[all Steinway campus](#)” due to its twenty-five Steinway pianos. Art studios have been recently renovated in Wade Hall and exhibit areas have been added to the Hatheway Cultural Center.

The [Scott Bibb Center](#) (SBC), conveniently located in the heart of the Alton community, is a hub for the College’s adult education programming, including high school equivalency preparation and additional career pathway training in construction/solar and computer careers. Often the first step on these career pathways for adult education students, the SBC offers classroom spaces with up-to-date computers and innovative furniture, fully-equipped construction and solar labs, and two Blendflex classrooms for the increased access and flexibility provided through a combination of in person, virtual, and asynchronous learning. [Adult Education](#) instructors are well-trained and provide excellent classroom instruction using Blendflex as well as hands-on, relevant vocational training. Programming at the SBC also provides the extra support of pathway advocates (case managers) and comprehensive [YouthBuild](#) programming to support effective teaching and learning.

The [Reid Memorial Library](#) is a member of the [College, Academic, and Research Libraries of Illinois \(CARLI\)](#) Consortium that gives all participating libraries access to each other’s collections. This reciprocal exchange feature is available to all students and team members. Resources may be requested from an owning library through electronic means available 24/7, and materials arrive within a few days. Students and team members are also welcome to physically visit a member library, borrow materials, and return them to their home library for delivery to the institution that owns the materials. The library also provides all students with research and computer lab support. Research librarians conduct classroom instruction and individual instruction in the [use of library resources](#) and information literacy. In doing so, they use [instructional materials](#) that align closely with classroom research assignments and reflect close collaboration between library team members and faculty. The library team provides assistance in [accessing and using](#) both print and digital resources, including eBooks and assistance with library research and [proper citation formats](#). Within the context of intellectual property and proper use laws, students are trained to search for, evaluate for relevance and reliability, and use information for class assignments and research. Many students use the library’s open computer labs to complete homework assignments or online exams and to conduct research.

The Main Complex includes five historic buildings (Baldwin, Caldwell, Wade, Fobes and Reid halls), totaling approximately 170,000-square-feet. In addition to being the largest classroom facility on the Godfrey campus, other significant student services are also housed in this facility including the library, bookstore, enrollment services, financial aid and more. [Planned renovations](#) include mechanical, electrical and plumbing upgrades, health and life safety improvements, the replacement of the fire suppression and fire alarm systems, ADA, lighting and elevator upgrades, interior finishes, and upgrades to the roofing systems, windows and building envelopes. The project will be partially funded by a \$37.5 million investment from the state of Illinois along with a \$12.5 million local match from the College. This renovation will help preserve the historic features of the facility while also advancing L&C's learning spaces and student services into the future.

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## 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

### Summary

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L&C courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded. L&C articulates and differentiates learning goals for transfer and applied degrees and certificates. Program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations.

L&C demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to our educational programs. Every degree program offered engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments and recognizing the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work. Team members and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to our programs and mission.

L&C has the team members needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services, including sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, such as oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; and involvement in assessment of student learning. All faculty members are appropriately qualified, including those in the dual credit program. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures. Faculty and student support team members are accessible for student inquiry, both inside and outside the classroom.

Infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective multi-modal teaching and learning are accessible. L&C provides student guidance in the effective use of research and information resources. Co-curricular programs are suited to our mission and contribute to the educational experience of our students.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

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

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The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

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

### Argument

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#### 4.A.1

L&C's Program Review follows the Illinois Community College Board's (ICCB) Program Review process as described in the [ICCB Program Review Manual](#). Program review plays a critical role for continuous improvement and evaluation of programs and services offered by the College. This review can be helpful in identifying inequities, including racial/gender equity gaps, both strengths and weakness of the program, as well as opportunities for improvement. The programs required to be reviewed are: Career and Technical Education, Academic Disciplines, Cross-Disciplinary Instruction, and Student and Academic Support Services. There are approximately 45 data elements that are required to be reported for these programs. These elements include unit costs, labor market demand, recruitment, enrollment, and other measures. [Program Review](#) is a revolving 5-year cycle.

The program review process is incorporated into a training course ([EDTR 279: Program Assessment](#)) which is run by the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA). This is a ten-month process for those programs designated for review by the ICCB. Beginning in 2016, the calendar for program review was moved up from August through May to May through February. This change allows for budget requests that are identifies during program review to be made in the current year's budget preparation process, rather than have to wait for the following year as was the case.

Throughout the program review process, the VPAA schedules meetings with institutional research personnel and program coordinators/directors to discuss data needs and monitor progress. The culmination of this work is a 45-minute presentation by program coordinators/directors to administrators, deans, and other faculty, with time allotted for questions and answers. There are 2 follow-up meetings that that take place: two weeks after a program-level review has been completed, and an interim follow-up meeting that occurs 18 months to 24 months after the completion of program-level review. These meetings are coordinated by the VPAA and serve to monitor the

progress of initiatives for program improvement after having completed their ICCB program-level review. The [dental hygiene program review](#) process resulted in replacing film with [digital x-rays](#), aligning the [program goals, competencies, and assessments with the ADEA Competencies for Entry into the Profession of Dental Hygiene](#), and adopting changes in periodontal instruction regarding assessment for dental hygiene diagnosis and case typing to be consistent with the American Academy of Periodontology. The Restoration Ecology program created a [new Certificate of Completion](#) following its [program review](#). Following the [2018 Mathematics Program Review](#) and Developmental Mathematics Program Review, room MA 208 was converted into a computer classroom for courses that require regular use of computers (e.g. Math 145, Math 235, and CCA sections of Math 131 and 138). Room MA 308 continues to serve as a computer lab that instructors can reserve for occasional use during class.

#### 4.A.2

Requests for consideration of [credit for prior learning](#) are managed through the Enrollment Center. Academic credits may be earned through a variety of prior learning assessments. These credits may be added to earned credits and used to satisfy program requirements resulting in a certificate, a degree, and/or a transfer to other colleges. In addition to transferring credits earned while attending other accredited institutions, persons may have [earned credits](#) (general occupational) for established professional knowledge and skill development through military training and work life experience. If the student earns a score on a proficiency test that demonstrates knowledge at the level established by L&C, proficiency credit may be entered on the student's transcript. A person seeking credit for prior learning at L&C must be enrolled prior to being awarded such credit. These credits might not transfer to other colleges. Credit for Prior Learning is counted toward graduation but is limited to no more than 50 percent of the credit hours required for an associate's degree or a certificate of proficiency. The credit is not included in the calculation of the grade point average and may not be used to establish full-time eligible status. Students may earn college-level credit by achieving qualifying scores on the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Advanced Placement (AP) Exams administered by the College Entrance Examination Board, International Baccalaureate (IB), and L&C departmental exams.

The advisor is the first to meet with the student seeking "non-traditional" credit (e.g., credit for military service, on-the-job experience, etc.) and takes the following steps: 1) completes a [Request for Non-Traditional Credit](#) form, 2) forwards the completed form to faculty with content expertise for that course or program, and 3) follows up with the student and faculty expert to make a final determination of credit transfer status. In making their recommendations, faculty may consult or defer to one or more of the following: the American Council on Education's (ACE) Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services, information from the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support (DANTES), the College [Assessment Center](#) (to administer L&C departmental proficiency exams), and industry specific certifications and credentials. The Enrollment Center advisor may also request that the student submit a statement documenting prior learning, which is also factored into the faculty review process. Generally, the College will only accept credits that it can apply to its own courses and programs. The exception is with Health Sciences applicants and student athletes, who have very specific transcript requirements that must be inspected.

#### 4.A.3

Requests for acceptance of transfer credits are also managed through the Enrollment Center. All student transcripts received are evaluated. All college-level credit hours earned with a grade of "D" or higher will be transcribed, but some programs require a ["C" or better](#). Transfer credit hours are acceptable only from colleges that are accredited. That is, they are accredited by one of the six regional associations of higher learning. Students transferring from other regionally accredited colleges must meet the same placement testing requirements and course prerequisites.

Additionally, the institution is bound to accept courses through the [Illinois Articulation Initiative \(IAI\)](#). Through the IAI framework, assurance of reciprocity for required coursework within the state begins when a college proposes a new course for transfer among the Illinois colleges and universities. Courses to be considered for university transfer and for the [General Education Core Curriculum](#) (GECC) must match the IAI standards for GECC "course categories" (i.e., Communications, Mathematics, Physical and Life Science, Humanities and Fine Arts, and Social and Behavioral Sciences). In addition to the IAI GECC categories, some courses may be

considered for university transfer and for assignment to IAI “majors” categories. These include: Agriculture, Biological Sciences, Business, Chemistry, Criminal Justice, Computer Science, English, Engineering, History, Industrial Technology, Mass Communication, Mathematics, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Theatre Arts.

#### 4.A.4

L&C actively manages all aspects of its academic programs, faculty, and [course offerings](#) through a series of institutional committees, reviews, and reporting requirements. Programs and program changes must first be approved by the [Academic Affairs Committee](#) (AAC) and then by the [Curriculum and Instruction Committee](#) (CIC), an institutional committee whose voting members are predominantly faculty. New programs require [Board of Trustees approval](#) before submitting to the ICCB for final approval, and then to the Higher Learning Commission. The AAC consists of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA), the two Academic Deans, Executive Director of College Effectiveness & Grant Development, Director of Academic Affairs, Associate Dean of Adult Education, VP for Student Affairs, Director of Technology Enhanced Learning, Instructional Designer, Dean of Student Experience, Assistant Director of Academic Advisement, and the Registrar. As a part of its review, the AAC may require revisions to the proposal as a condition of approval prior to forwarding to the CIC. The CIC then also reviews the proposal to ensure that all of the following essential curricular elements have been included: 1) supporting evidence of the need for the program, 2) evidence that the proposal is in full compliance with [ICCB policies](#), 3) cost/need justification for establishing the program, and 4) copies of the proposed new course syllabi using an approved (College/ICCB) [template](#). The program’s curriculum must also meet applicable ICCB policies regarding [maximum permissible credit hours for particular programs](#). When approved by both the AAC and CIC, the materials are sent to ICCB for approval. Additionally, the AAC and CIC monitor course master syllabi, course objectives, and institutional evaluation of student achievement.

Similarly, new credit course proposals are first reviewed by the appropriate dean, then the [AAC](#) and once approved, forwarded to the [CIC](#) before submission to the ICCB. As with [new program requests](#), supporting documentation for a [new course](#) must substantiate a need for the course. In addition, transfer courses must be articulated with at least three senior institutions before being approved by the ICCB. L&C is a member of the [Illinois Articulation Initiative \(IAI\)](#) through which certain transfer courses are further scrutinized for applicability in a statewide system of general education core curriculum courses and discipline-specific major courses. Any courses designated for the IAI General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) must meet standards for the particular category for which it is seeking assignment: i.e., Communications, Mathematics, Physical and Life Science, Humanities and Fine Arts, or Social and Behavioral Sciences. The new course proposal package includes a completed course syllabus with special emphasis on course objectives that are defined in measurable terms. The completed proposal package is sent first to the ICCB for its approval and then, if applicable, to the IAI.

L&C actively studies all aspects of students' academic experience beginning as early as studying the [impact of placement tests](#) and moving on to the differences between [online and face to face course success rates](#) and innovative practices such as [Complete College America's co-requisite remediation](#). These efforts provide examples of L&C exercising authority over prerequisites as well as dovetailing into efforts to ensure rigor. L&C's Student Success Team (SST) has studied rigor and [student success](#) for over ten years. The SST has adopted [data-informed practices for the pilots](#) it undertakes, eventually being nominated for a Bellwether Award for this practice. L&C also monitors course rigor through [classroom observations](#) for both full-time and [adjunct faculty](#) to wrap a qualitative and social context to the information and data developed from the Office of Institutional Research (OIR). The expectations for student learning are a goal of the SST and administration of the institution. From clear language on [course syllabi](#) to classroom assessment tools to institutional studies of [course success](#), L&C has a significant focus on student learning.

L&C provides tremendous access to learning resources through both an expansive Learning Resource Center ([Reid Memorial Library](#)) and membership to [CARLI](#) (Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois). In addition to simply providing access to learning resources, L&C has conducted some analyses of the impact of [library usage on student success and retention](#).

L&C's Human Resources (HR) department monitors and tracks [faculty credentialing](#). HR requires official

transcripts for all applicants to positions within the institution with extra care taken to ensure faculty have the required number of graduate credit hours or a degree in the subject matter they are hired to teach. Transfer course instructors must have a master's degree in the appropriate discipline or a master's plus 18 graduate hours in the appropriate discipline, and career/technical instructors must have a degrees in the discipline, 2,000 hours of related work experience, and/or industry credential or certificate that qualifies them with technical expertise.

The [High School Partnership program \(HSP\)](#) manages dual credit courses and is staffed by a director, Community Education Center (CEC) coordinators with office assistants, and a departmental secretary. Program coordinators and academic deans oversee the qualification and approval of instructors and dual credit courses. The CEC coordinators serve as liaisons to the high schools in their assigned areas. HSP partners in the community include school boards, district superintendents, high school principals, high school guidance counselors, and teachers.

Dual credit instructors are required to have the same credentials as college-level instructors. Students must meet all [academic prerequisites](#) and follow established procedures for enrolling in credit courses, including placement testing, which is administered by CEC coordinators. Prospective HSP instructors must complete an [instructor-approval form](#) and provide their college transcripts. They are also asked to complete and return a [course approval form](#) and course syllabus for each course they want to include in the HSP curriculum. The program coordinators and the applicable dean oversee this approval process and make the final determination to accept or deny an instructor or a course for dual credit.

L&C program coordinators emphasize consistency between high school instructors and college-level faculty in their approach to learning assessment. [Common rubrics](#), common final exams, and other assessment materials may be shared with high school partners. HSP teachers are required to [attend meetings](#) with the program coordinators to share updates to the curriculum. HSP teachers are also given the opportunity, at no cost to themselves, to enroll in EDTR-prefixed courses (i.e., Education / Training courses). Additionally, program coordinators conduct annual [in-school observations](#) of dual credit instructors. Administration members regularly meet with [high school principals and district superintendents](#) to provide updates. High [school counselors](#) are invited to attend update meetings periodically on campus. When it is appropriate and feasible to do so, the HSP program assists with the purchase of classroom resources for partnering high schools.

Additionally, L&C's Mathematics Department has partnered with district high schools to develop and implement [transitional math](#) (TM) courses for high school seniors. Successful completion of a TM course during the senior year of high school guarantees direct placement into the corresponding college-level math course upon matriculation to L&C, avoiding the necessity of any developmental mathematics courses. Three options are available: (1) QL/STATS which allows for direct placement into either Math 138 (General Education Mathematics) or Math 145 (General Education Statistics), (2) TECH which allow for direct placement into Math 125 (Technical Mathematics I), or (3) STEM which allows for direct placement into Math 131 (College Algebra). Further, both QL/STATS and TECH have received state portability which guarantees placement at any Illinois community college. A recent application has also been made for state portability for STEM. Similarly, L&C's English Department is in the process of partnering with district high schools to develop and implement [transitional English](#) (TE) courses for high school seniors. Successful completion of a TE course during the senior year of high school guarantees direct placement into the college-level, first semester English course upon matriculation to L&C, avoiding the necessity of any developmental English or reading courses. During the spring 2023 semester, members of L&C's English Department and Student Success Center will be facilitating the formation of a transitional English partnership agreement and course with eight schools. The tentative completion date for the partnership agreement is August 2024.

#### 4.A.5

Nine of L&C's programs are licensed or certified through specialized accreditation: seven in the Health Sciences ([Nursing](#), [Occupational Therapy Assistant](#), [Medical Assisting](#), [Paramedicine](#), [Pharmacy Technician](#), [Dental Assisting](#), and [Dental Hygiene](#)) and two others [Automotive Technology](#) and the College's [High School Partnership dual credit program](#) (through 2021). Since their first accreditation, all of these programs have been found to be in compliance with accreditation standards and fully reaccredited in the scheduled review cycle.

#### 4.A.6

L&C has a strong commitment to ensure program graduates transition into either a four-year institution or the labor market successfully. By including a [labor market outlook](#) within program review and by requiring [program advisory committees](#) for career programs, L&C ensures program are focused on preparing students to enter occupations with labor market demand and with the skills desired by employers. A few examples of advisory committee suggestions that were adopted are [new courses](#) to better prepare [paralegal students](#) and the adoption of [Dentrix Enterprise](#) to give [dental assisting and hygiene students](#) the exact electronic records that they will see in the workplace.

[Transfer to four-year](#) institutions makes up a significant part of the L&C mission. The quantity of [transfer agreements](#) held with other institutions demonstrates L&C's commitment to ensuring that students seeking to continue their education beyond L&C have that opportunity. For many reasons tracking employment rates is one of the most challenging endeavors for institutions of higher learning to undertake. This is doubly challenging for L&C due to the proximity of the state border. The ICCB developed a (now defunct) web portal to allow institutions to monitor graduates post-graduation to follow earnings, employment type and other facets of recent graduates work experience. Unfortunately, this was also limited to Illinois employment. L&C is currently due to begin participation with the ICCB in the development of a new web portal, but plans still limit the effectiveness to in-state employment only.

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## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

### Argument

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#### 4.B.1

L&C maintains, through the [Academic Affairs Committee](#) (AAC) and the [Curriculum and Instruction Committee](#) (CIC), [course master syllabi](#) to ensure student learning goals are clear for all courses offered at the institution.

The College's [mission](#) statement affirms the centrality of student achievement. All degree and certificate programs (regardless of the intended delivery mode and delivery locations), beginning with their [initial proposal](#) and continuing through scheduled program reviews and ongoing assessment, must pass the tests of consistency. Those tests include L&C's [mission, purposes, vision, and values; ICCB regulations; IAI guidelines](#); L&C's internal processes for [program approval](#) and [review](#); and the faculty's [Annual Performance Objectives](#) (APO's) or [Faculty Annual Reflections](#) (FARs). Course syllabi must define student learning objectives and assessment methods that are based on the [Master course syllabi](#) approved by the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC), Curriculum and Instruction Committee (CIC), and the ICCB. There is a strong continuity from course learning objectives at the syllabus level, through definitions of student learning outcomes and assessment plans at the program level.

[The Program-level assessment](#) process was developed in [response](#) to the [HLC's finding in L&C's 2017 Assurance Argument that required](#):

*Evidence demonstrating the implementation of a program-level assessment for CTE programs, distinct from the program review process required by the ICCB. This should include development of program goals, strategies and tools to assess the goals, and evidence of how the assessment results are used to improve student learning in CTE programs.*

Program-level assessment at L&C is an annual process, incorporating current data on key elements to provide an accurate assessment of all CTE programs for each academic year. The purpose of program-level assessment is to provide program coordinators, deans, and the VPAA with the current status of core elements of a CTE program on an annual basis. Environmental changes that may impact a CTE program can be identified and addressed much sooner than having to wait for the ICCB program-level review process that occurs on a five-year cycle. The key elements that comprise program-level assessment are: 1) program-level outcomes, 2) success rates for courses, 3) course-level assessment, and 4) program courses that have general education assessment imbedded in them. Program level outcomes are evaluated and updated through advisory committee meetings. Stakeholders in the community ensure that our graduates have the correct skill set for their future careers. Success rates in courses give indication of possible road blocks to success and/or a need to re-evaluate the prerequisites. Course-level assessment at L&C is a component of the [Annual Performance Objectives](#) (APOs) or [Faculty Annual Reflection](#) (FAR). Finally, [general education assessment](#) in CTE programs speaks to the "soft skills" that are built into each program.

L&C faculty are also required to engage in an APO/FAR to assess achievement of course learning objectives. The APO/FAR process provides the framework for reporting of planned student learning assessment objectives and

methods in the beginning of the academic year, and a reporting of results in the following year. Through the [APO process](#), every full-time faculty member is engaged annually and in a continuous manner in student learning assessment and course evaluation. Some [faculty work in teams](#) to address research questions related to student learning outcomes in their discipline and/or across disciplines. In fall 2020, APOs were replaced by the FAR process as a result of faculty input and research around the impact of faculty reflection on meeting performance objectives. The FAR process is very similar to the APO process, but is less prescriptive in the reporting. The faculty close the loop by altering and improving their courses to better meet the learning objectives. Each faculty member meets with their academic dean to discuss the results and next steps of their assessment. Changes made to the Occupational Therapy Assistant program are an example of closing the loop from research done in an [team APO](#) to program level changes.

One of the aspirations within [KD2 of the Strategic Plan](#) is to develop an annual program wellness checklist as well as a [Program Wellness Committee](#). In fall 2021, the Program Wellness Team was established, and work to develop the checklist is underway. It may eventually incorporate the program-level assessment, which will strengthen our understanding of each program.

Additionally, the work of the [Student Success Team \(SST\)](#) is focused on improving student success through pilot testing innovative teaching and learning practices derived by engaging the literature, conference attendance, and regional and national professional memberships. The team is made up of the VPAA, Office of Institutional Research, Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness, VP of Student Affairs, Director of Academic Affairs Operations, Academic Deans, Director of Diversity, Equity and inclusive Excellence, President of the Faculty Association, Registrar, Mental Health Counselor, and several faculty members. The SST provides L&C with an excellent opportunity to [close the loop and scale up success](#) and to mitigate negative impacts for students.

An additional requirement in [response](#) to the [HLC's finding in L&C's 2017 Assurance Argument](#) was:

*Evidence of implementation of outcomes-based assessment in co-curricular programs, and evidence of assessment results used to improve student learning in co-curricular programs.*

L&C works with the definition that co-curricular programs represent “activities, programs, and learning experiences that complement, in some way, what students are learning in school” (The Glossary of Education Reform, 2014). L&C has committed both personnel and technology to better understand the impact of its student services upon student learning outcomes.

Developing a state-of-the-art technology infrastructure that leverages student data collected from co-curricular programs has been an institutional priority for several years at L&C. Central to this architecture is the Blackboard Analytics data warehouse. The data warehouse serves as a data repository, housing fact and dimension tables related to student characteristics, enrollment, and grades from the Student Information System. The ability to query the data warehouse is provided by the Pyramid Analytics reporting tool. The data warehouse at L&C was implemented in 2012. Another unique component to L&C's technology infrastructure is the ability to track students who interact with co-curricular student services. For example, data collected from students who use the [library](#) to ask a reference question or attend a library instruction class are collected through a card-swipe platform called SARSTrak. These data are then sent to a Blackboard Analytics data warehouse where they are connected to student-level data housed in the SIS. This same process has been implemented to assess the effects of [tutoring, student support services, and student life and clubs](#) on student success and retention.

In addition, the most recent [Faculty Agreement](#) allows faculty who have attained the doctoral level to receive 3 release contact hours to spend performing research or scholarly work. Some of these projects also involve assessment of student learning.

#### **4.B.2**

The Student Success Team (SST) acts as a think tank for L&C. A data-centric organization, the SST pilots concepts from a wide variety of areas to test the viability and impact of interventions within the social and historical context of L&C. By determining the [measures of success](#) at the outset of a pilot, the committee helps to negate the natural instinct, toward ownership and protectionism, moving toward a more clinical analysis of impact

for students. As pilots are tested, they are institutionalized, abandoned, or extended based on data and how those data measure against the predetermined measures of success.

The [Center for Effective Teaching and Learning \(CETL\)](#) was formed by the Faculty Association and funded through a grant from the National Education Association, which was matched by the College. The center provides activities such as mentoring, training and guest speaker seminars to help faculty improve learning through effective teaching and learning practices. CETL specifically provides assessment support in the form of mentoring and tutoring of individual faculty. Current activities include coordinating and scheduling CEFD classes for faculty, scheduling outside speakers and facilitating workshops. Their goals are to support and enable faculty in:

- Making research-based decisions regarding classroom techniques;
- Creating methods for assessing student learning; and
- Pioneering innovative teaching practices.

CETL also holds an annual [K.Y.S.S. \(Keeping Your Students Successful\) Conference](#). This is a day-long opportunity for faculty development and sharing of best practices, which is open to all faculty.

L&C is also participating in the [Accelerating Student Progress and Increasing Racial Equity \(ASPIRE\) Project](#), developed by Women Employed. ASPIRE Project goals include: 1) accelerating students' progress through developmental education (English & Math), with a particular focus on Black and Latinx students; 2) providing opportunities for colleges to learn from one another; and 3) using what is collectively learned from the project to inform the field and Women Employed's developmental education policy agenda. Participating colleges and Women Employed work collaboratively to achieve the goals of the project.

#### 4.B.3

L&C's policies and practice around stating, assessing, and sharing information regarding student learning are both inclusive and aimed toward continual improvement. Individual [APOs/FARs](#) and [team APOs/ FARs](#) are excellent examples of the institution providing opportunities to team members for input on student learning assessment and has created an environment focused on improving student success. All full-time faculty members [are required](#) to complete APOs/FARs. All Program Coordinators complete an annual Program-Level Assessment. They also complete and present a program review on a 5-year cycle (as required by ICCB). The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) supports these processes by providing valuable data need to assess student learning. Academic deans and directors, along with the VPAA, discuss the findings of faculty members' research on student learning and support implementation of their implications.

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## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

### Argument

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#### 4.C.1

L&C has three institutional processes for identifying and setting goals in support of completion, persistence, and retention. Each process has a slightly different objective, yet together all three serve to provide comprehensive view of efforts to improve and assess completion, persistence, and retention at L&C.

The first process involves the Student Success Team (SST), which is charged with identifying, piloting, and assessing all initiatives related to student success. In response to the [2017 Action Letter from the HLC](#), the Student Success Team established [goals for completion, persistence, and retention](#) for all degree-seeking students. The goals were submitted to the L&C's Strategic Planning Committee and were subsequently approved. This process will continue annually.

The second process, becoming a member of the [HLC Persistence and Completion Academy](#), required the College to develop an institutional persistence and completion strategy. L&C's strategy consists of [goals](#) collectively identified by our HLC Persistence and Academy Home Team with assigned owners and dates for completion that support L&C's efforts. The HLC Academy's Primary Mentor and Senior Scholar for L&C monitor the progress toward goals, providing feedback and questions twice a year. [Feedback from the HLC Primary Mentor](#) regarding L&C's goal-setting and assessment has been positive. The final HLC Persistence and Completion Academy project was the presentation of a [poster](#).

The third process for establishing goals for completion, persistence, and retention is through L&C's Strategic Planning Committee. Also known as the Project Oversight Committee, L&C's Strategic Planning Committee meets on a [quarterly basis](#) to discuss institutional goals, projects, and initiatives identified in L&C's Strategic Planning Document. In 2021, a [new Strategic Plan](#) was developed and approved by the Board of Trustees. [Aspiration 3](#) of Key Direction 1 is to "Work to align data, policies, processes and curriculum to provide support for student success and progression. Create a holistic and educational experience for students during their advising and coaching experiences." The initiatives under this aspiration will continue the work from the previous strategic plan.

#### 4.C.2

L&C collects, disseminates, and discusses student persistence, retention and completion data. In addition to establishing completion, persistence, and retention goals for all degree seeking students, the Student Success Team identified two "at-risk" student cohorts for retention improvement in response to the HLC Action Letter. Goals to



improve retention for [African-American male students and part-time students with a cumulative GPA below 2.3](#) were set, and, based upon institutional data gathered from various student support services, potential interventions were identified that could improve retention for these two student cohorts. These goals for retention improvement were recommended to and subsequently confirmed by L&C's Strategic Planning Committee. It is also important to note that requests for data to improve student retention also include campus constituencies other than the Student Success Team. As part of their research associated with APOs and FARs, L&C faculty often work closely with the institutional research office to [request and analyze data](#) related to completion, persistence, and retention in their programs.

#### 4.C.3

The [Student Success Team](#) (SST) is a data-centric group that meets monthly to discuss the status of ongoing [initiatives](#). The SST has been examining and piloting programs related to improving student persistence, retention, and completion for many years. As a result of this focus, L&C leadership began discussing participation in HLC's Persistence and Completion Academy. L&C's participation with HLC's Persistence and Completion Academy is focused on broadening the collection of data relating to the impact of [student support service utilization on student persistence, retention, and completion](#).

#### 4.C.4

L&C is fortunate to have a technology platform that includes a [Blackboard Analytics data warehouse](#) for identifying completion, persistence, and retention data by many student demographic characteristics and support services. With respect to the [collection of completion, persistence, and retention data](#), L&C regularly provides these data based upon academic program to program coordinators as part of the program review and assessment process. Some examples of the contexts and methodologies for this work are listed below:

- [Student Enrollment and Fact Book](#)
- [Retention and Completion Goal Setting for At-Risk Cohorts](#)
- [General Overview of Enrollment, Retention, and Completion Trends](#)

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## 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

### Summary

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

L&C has and continues to demonstrate responsibility for the quality of its educational programs and learning environments through rigorous models of application, review, and continuous assessment and improvement. The effort needed from team members to support the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) also displays L&C commitment to ensuring the quality of its educational programs and learning environments. L&C strives to better understand the impact of support services on student success, persistence, and completion.

The combination of L&C's entrepreneurial spirit and willingness to pilot new and different ideas has led to the development of a culture expecting data-informed decisions. In the assessment and evaluation of student learning and program effectiveness, L&C has developed models and methodologies for researching and analyzing student and institutional data that has allowed team members to present at regional and national conferences regarding the outcomes of those piloted ideas. The outcomes of this research and the data generated in everyday courses and in these pilots and projects allow L&C to close the loop and keep effective efforts and discontinue those not showing a benefit to students.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*

## 5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

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

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

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

### Argument

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#### 5 A.1

Governing Board of Trustees:

L&C's [Board of Trustees](#) consists of eight members comprised of seven elected trustees and one student trustee. All trustees have voting authority except the student trustee which has an advisory vote. Trustees are elected at large by the voters of the [District 536](#) for staggered six-year terms. The student trustee is elected by the student body and serves a one-year term.

L&C is fortunate to have a Board of Trustees of engaged community leaders dedicated to the Mission and Core Values of L&C, including providing quality education and community outreach to district residents. Board members include a former chief financial officer, a former certified public accountant, a chief executive officer of a local Urban League chapter, the president of a successful welding firm, a retired director of the Illinois state police, and a superintendent of a local school district.

To ensure that all Board members understand their roles and responsibilities, L&C schedules an orientation meeting hosted by the [Illinois Community College Trustee Association](#) following Board elections. New Board members are also required to complete [Open Meetings Act training](#) offered through the Office of the Attorney General of Illinois.

Responsibilities of the Board are expressly stated in the Board Policy Manual.

L&C Board of Trustees responsibilities:

- to select and appoint a President who will be the chief administrative officer of the College and will perform the executive functions of the Board;
- to appoint all other College personnel;
- to consider and take appropriate action in all matters of policy relating to the welfare of the College;
- to establish the principal objectives and policies of the College;
- to hold, preserve, and monitor the investments of District assets;
- to provide adequate funds for the efficient operation of the College;
- to serve as the Board of Appeals for students, team members, and citizens of the district on matters of policy

and policy interpretation; such review being made after all normal and proper procedures through administrative lines have been followed and exhausted;

- to otherwise fulfill the duties of the Board as prescribed by the Illinois Community College Act.

Board members are kept apprised of Board related procedures and issues through various communication channels including the [Board Policy Manual](#), and a [Board Book](#) made available via [BoardDocs](#) to the public on the L&C web site providing information related to the business to be addressed at each monthly Board meeting.

Board meetings are held monthly or, when required, in special session, and conducted in compliance with the State's [Open Meetings Act](#). [Agendas](#) for upcoming meetings and official [minutes](#) are posted in BoardDocs on the L&C website for public notice and inspection. In addition, a [synopsis](#) of board meeting discussions and actions is sent to all team members via email within days after a Board meeting. L&C also makes Board meetings available for viewing in real time through Zoom and for previous meetings via [YouTube](#). For special purposes, the Board may create an ad hoc committee, though the Board is committed to action by the Board as a whole. When a special meeting of the Board is established, the public shall be informed 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Individual students and team members regularly attend and actively participate in Board meetings. This offers a unique opportunity for trustees, students, team members, and the public to engage with and learn from each other. In addition to the scheduled meetings, Board members are also given the opportunity to [attend meetings and conferences](#) related to their Board service. An official delegate to the Illinois Community College Trustees Association is also designated by the Board to attend meetings on behalf of L&C's Board. Board members also frequently attend campus meetings, cultural programs, and other events. Many Board members also serve on local community boards and committees.

Board members are formally engaged when [prioritizing missions](#), providing feedback for [strategic planning](#), and [determining core values](#) for the institution.

Administration:

The president's [Leadership Team](#) represents L&C team members from across all campuses to help guide discussions related to policy and strategic directions to the president. The Leadership Team members regularly communicate with team members through email and meetings to apprise them of executive-level issues and information. All Team meetings are another conduit for sharing information among all L&C team members. All Team meetings are facilitated by the president and are held on a monthly basis via Zoom. [Informational Items](#) at monthly Board meetings also provide an opportunity for Board members to learn about special projects undertaken and awards received by team members. At every monthly board meeting a presentation is given by team members that highlights an achievement or program within a campus department.

Senior level administrators also serve as leads for [Strategic Plan Key Direction Teams](#). Key direction teams are charged to identify [aspirations and assessment measures](#) in support of the strategic plan. Administrators also serve as members of [Mover Teams](#), which are created to support aspirations in the Strategic Plan.

Faculty:

The Board and Administration's relationship with the faculty is governed by a [Faculty Agreement](#) with the L&C Faculty Association. This contract covers policy matters related to conditions of employment, work load, rank and promotion, salaries, and tenure. Tenure decisions are determined with input from the full-time faculty in the appropriate department. The [Rank and Promotion Committee](#) makes faculty promotion recommendations to the President and Board of Trustees.

Shared governance with faculty has also been institutionalized through standing committees established to inform and create policy. L&C's Strategic Plan was developed using the [feedback provided by team members](#). [Faculty input](#) was also sought and incorporated for determining core values for L&C. Faculty also serve as team leads for [Strategic Plan Key Direction Teams](#) and Mover Teams that together form the structure of the L&C's Strategic Plan. The [Curriculum and Instruction Committee](#) assists the Vice President of Academic Affairs in the evaluation

and improvement of instruction; reviews and approves new courses and new certificate and degree programs; reviews existing syllabi, courses, programs, and degree requirements; and reviews syllabi, courses, and programs for withdrawal.

Through the [General Education Assessment Committee](#), faculty have identified six general education learning outcomes that all students should acquire as a result of completing a certificate or degree at L&C. These learning outcomes are embedded in courses across the curriculum. Assessment of learning outcomes is applied using rubrics created and scored by faculty. Each rubric is based on several criteria and scored on a five-point scale. Each year, a [General Education Assessment Annual Report](#) is produced, providing scores and analysis of general education outcomes.

The Technology Enhanced Learning Committee (TELC) is an institutional committee with a membership of 75% or more faculty. These faculty serve as members of the online peer support team and take responsibility for reviewing online courses on a three-year schedule with the exception of new online courses which are reviewed before the first course offering. In addition to their knowledge of Blackboard online learning platform, they also preview and invite other faculty to preview [new technologies](#) and software used to improve instruction and student learning.

The [Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#) (CETL) was formed by the Faculty Association in 2002 and funded through a grant from the National Education Association, which was matched by the College. The center provides activities such as mentoring, training, and guest speaker seminars to help faculty improve learning through effective teaching and learning practices. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning provides assistance in the form of mentoring and tutoring of individual faculty on assessment.

Collaborating with other campus organizations that also facilitate diversity on campus, the [Diversity Council](#) is a faculty led effort to plan and promote various [diversity-inspired activities](#) and acts as a supportive resource for all other existing L&C organizations. Among the goals of the Diversity Council are promoting cross-cultural understanding and broadening diversity experiences on campus. Faculty also serve on a variety of other standing and ad hoc [institutional committees](#) and [mover teams](#).

Staff:

Staff share in the governance of the College through interactions with their supervisors and other College leadership. L&C's institutional culture places a high value on the perspectives of staff, regularly seeking their input with important policy and decisions. For example, the president sought the input of all staff in determining [Strategic Plan goals](#) and [core values](#). Understanding how staff view their opportunities for career advancement and professional development has also been collected through [surveys](#) at L&C.

Shared governance with staff through committee service includes open invitations to serve on [Mover Teams](#) in support of aspirations identified in the Strategic Plan. Another committee is the [Student Support Services Group](#). This committee consists of staff members across various student support services offices who meet to discuss issues related to coordinating and tracking services to improve student success.

Staff are also encouraged to offer suggestions and recommendations through regularly scheduled Staff Forums facilitated by the president, and to conduct their own surveys looking into issues such as [team member recruitment, development, and retention](#).

Students:

L&C's [Student Government Association](#) is composed of elected officers, independent members, club representatives and is governed by a Student Government Association [constitution](#). The student body elects a student trustee to the L&C Board of Trustees. The student trustee serves in an advisory role to represent student interests to the President and the L&C Board of Trustees and also serves as a member of the Student Government Association.

The Student Government Association also approves [all student organizations and clubs](#), provides supplemental funding for club activities, and consults and advises on policies affecting the student body. A portion of Student Activity Fees are [allocated](#) at the discretion of the Student Government Association with the approval of the dean of student support services and/or the vice president for student affairs. The College president attends Student Government Association meetings each year.

Students are engaged each semester in a Board & Student Dinner. This dinner is scheduled before the monthly board of trustees meeting. Campus leadership, student advisors, and faculty nominate students representing a range of diverse student backgrounds and academic interests for this event.

Another example of shared governance including L&C students is the [Student Athlete Advisory Council](#) (SAAC). SAAC promotes academic success, team spirit, community service, and [fundraising](#).

In the strategic planning process, all students were ask to provide their feedback for identifying [goals for L&C](#). Other examples of seeking student feedback include:

- [L&C's Core Values Survey](#)
- [Remote Learning Survey - 2020](#)
- [Remote Learning Survey - 2021](#)

In addition, students are very active in initiatives related to Key Directions of the College's strategic plan such as the [Kick or Treat kickball game](#) and [Hiking through the Holidays](#).

## 5 A.2

L&C's Institutional Research Office manages all data requests from campus leadership, team members, students, and the community. L&C's [technology infrastructure](#) is supported by a Blackboard Analytics data warehouse and Pyramid Analytics reporting tool. The following are examples of documents used for informed decision making:

Enrollment (selected):

- [Dashboard of Key Metrics](#)
- [Student Enrollment and Fact Book](#)
- [Enrollment Analysis by Student Type and Status](#)
- [Enrollment by Student Pathway](#)
- [Enrollment Projections](#)
- [Revenue and Expenditure Projections](#)
- [Enrollment Management Plan](#)

These data reports were used to develop key components of L&C's Enrollment Management Plan.

Regional Demographics (selected)

- [L&C Economic Impact Study](#)
- [District Economic and Labor Force Report](#)
- [District Demographic Overview Report](#)
- [District High School Graduate Projections](#)
- [Correlational Analysis of Enrollment and District High School Graduates](#)
- [Application Conversion Rates Report](#)

These data reports were used to develop key components of L&C's operating budget and potential new programs.

Program-Level Assessment (selected)

- [Program Demand Gap Analysis](#)
- [Program Review](#)
- [Program Assessment](#)

These data reports were used to develop key components of L&C's efforts for quality improvement of programs and program-level accreditation.

Course-Level Assessment (selected)

- [Faculty Annual Reflections \(FAR\)](#)
- [Annual Performance Objectives \(APO\)](#)
- [The Science of Happiness](#)

These data reports were used to develop key components of L&C's efforts to improve student learning and success.

Student Success (selected)

- [Assessment of Intrusive Advising](#)
- [General Education Assessment](#)
- [Honors College Assessment](#)
- [Retention Rates by Support Service](#)
- [Success Rates by Modality](#)
- [Gatekeeper Course Success Rates](#)
- [Assessment of Library Services on Retention and Grades](#)
- [Assessment of Corequisite Math and English Courses](#)

The following are examples of survey data that have been used to inform student learning and strategic planning.

Surveys (selected)

- [Remote Learning Student Survey - 2021](#)
- [Team Member Recruitment Survey - 2021](#)
- [Strategic Planning Survey of the Community - 2021](#)
- [Strategic Planning Survey of Team Members - 2020](#)
- [Strategic Planning Survey of Students - 2021](#)
- [Employer Satisfaction Survey - 2021](#)
- [Culture and DEI Survey - 2022](#)

These data reports were used to develop key components of L&C's strategic plan.

### 5 A.3

L&C has made a purposeful effort of creating an institutional culture of shared governance. Students and team members are regularly asked to provide their feedback regarding academic requirements, policy, and processes.

During the Covid pandemic, students and team members were asked to provide their [feedback](#) each semester regarding the support they were receiving from L&C in a remote learning environment. Students were also asked to provide their modality preferences [during](#) the Covid pandemic and [after](#) the pandemic had ended. Team members were asked to provide feedback regarding [needed resources](#) while teaching and working remotely. Students provide feedback through [end-of-course surveys](#).

The [process for submitting curricular-related proposals](#) includes administration and faculty. Actions related to courses, curricula, and programs are first sent to the [Academic Affairs Committee](#) which consists of administrators including: vice presidents, deans, and directors. After an action has been approved by the Academic Affairs Committee, it is sent to the faculty led [Curriculum and Instruction Committee](#) where the action is voted on. Only faculty have a vote on the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. Actions approved by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee are then sent to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Team members also work together on academic issues through the [Student Success Team](#). This team is comprised of administrators, faculty, and staff with the charge to seek evidence-based strategies to improving student success using [data](#) provided by the institutional research office.



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## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

### Argument

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#### 5.B.1

L&C's Human Resources office is committed to ensuring all employee applicants possess the requisite skills, experience, and education for their position through clearly stated [job descriptions](#) with competitive salary and benefits to attract the best qualified candidates. L&C also provides [funding for professional development](#) to all team members.

New-hire candidates are carefully screened and interviewed by several managers, often assisted by staff and faculty, to make sure they have the appropriate skills, background and experience. This includes recruitment and fair consideration of [minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and veterans](#) and an institutional commitment to [non-discriminatory employment practices](#). Hiring practices are also informed by L&C's [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence Blueprint](#).

To ensure that new positions and vacancies are filled in a timely manner, a [hiring process timeline](#) has been developed. This process is coordinated with the technology tool, [PeopleAdmin](#). All employment offers are contingent upon the results of a drug screen and [background check](#).

When hired, staff and administrative employees are evaluated within a six-month probationary period. For all other employees, annual performance assessments are conducted for [management](#), [non-exempt](#), and [salaried](#) employee classifications. Faculty are subject to the [tenure policy](#) established through the [Illinois Public Community College Act](#). All new team members are given a [Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual](#) that describes in detail institutional policies related to workplace conditions, policies, salary, and benefits. In 2019 L&C engaged a private firm to conduct a team member classification and compensation study to ensure that all employee classifications were competitively and fairly compensated with current market conditions in our region.

Additional human resources information supporting L&C's ability to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

- L&C reported a total of [558 employees](#) on its 2022 HLC Institutional Update.
- L&C has a total of 94 full-time faculty and 197 part-time faculty providing a Student-to-Faculty Ratio of 24:02 in 2022.
- L&C is [organized](#) to effectively and efficiently serve its district stakeholders in multiple locations throughout the district.
- L&C approved a new [collective bargaining agreement](#) in 2022 with L&C's Faculty Association.
- L&C support for faculty professional development through the [Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#) (CETL).

#### 5.B.2

L&C is appropriately resourced to meet our planned goals, as evidenced by our [2021 IPEDS Feedback Report](#) indicating that we compare favorably with our peer institutions in terms of resources and outcomes.

The annual budget development and approval process is developed to [align funding](#) to support [L&C's strategic plan](#).

L&C's strategic plan is based upon [key directions](#), which serve as overarching objectives for the College. Key directions in L&C's strategic plan have been determined through feedback provided by surveys provided to [team members](#) and [students](#). At the present time, there are four key directions.

- Key Direction 1 - Expect enrollment and retention improvements.
- Key Direction 2 - Invest in program and curriculum development.
- Key Direction 3 - Build a transparent and inclusive campus culture.
- Key Direction 4 - Broaden community and educational collaboration.

Each key direction is coordinated by two team leads. Team leads help identify aspirations that support the key direction. Each aspiration has an associated mover team that is responsible providing information about: the actions needed to support the aspiration, how the aspiration will be assessed, and the current status of the aspiration. Aspiration mover team membership is open to any team member that wishes to participate by completing an [Aspiration Mover Team Interest Form](#). As a result of linking strategic planning and the budgetary processes, L&C has increased its investment in personnel, technology, and programming.

An evidenced-based assessment environment has been cultivated at L&C for many years. In 2012, L&C invested in a [Blackboard Analytics](#) data warehouse, which allows the Institutional Research Office to quickly assess goals related to student success such as [retention rates for specific student cohorts](#).

The following are examples of how Blackboard Analytics has been leveraged for the assessment of aspirations and goals in L&C's strategic plan.

- [Enrollment Management Plan](#)
- [L&C Goals - Retention, Persistence, Completion, and Enrollment](#).
- [Gatekeeper Course Success Rates](#).
- [Assessment of Developmental Education Acceleration through Complete College America](#).
- [Student Enrollment and Fact Book](#).
- [Higher Learning Commission Persistence and Completion Academy results poster](#).

### 5.B.3

All major College [expenditures are approved](#) by the Board of Trustees, and strict procedures are followed to ensure the integrity and audit-readiness of accounting, financial, and other business operations. L&C's financial records are audited each year by an [independent auditing firm](#). These audits consistently certify that the College's accounting conforms to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

The latest fiscal year 2022 College audit continued the longstanding record of exemplary internal control with no material weaknesses or instances of noncompliance to be reported under Government Auditing Standards. Audits for the L&C Community College Foundation also certify that financial statements fairly represent the financial position of the L&C Community College Foundation.

L&C's management of investment public funds is bounded by an [investment policy](#). L&C's investment policy stipulates that funds should be invested to provide the highest return with the maximum security. Four objectives of the investment policy in order of importance are: legality, safety, liquidity, and yield.

Examples of L&C's commitment to fiscal stewardship include:

- Received a [Total Composite Financial Indicator Score](#) (excluding GASB) of 4.72 in 2022. A score equal to or greater than 1.1 is considered "Above the Zone".

- Received a [Primary Reserve Composite Financial Indicator Score](#) (excluding GASB) of 1.71 in 2022. A score equal to or greater than 1.1 is considered "Above the Zone".
- Lowered its long-term debt [9.4% in 2021](#), from \$111,235,061 to \$100,823,372.
- Lowered its long-term debt [8.2% in 2020](#) from \$121,169,153 to \$111,235,061.
- Lowered its long-term debt [7.1% in 2019](#) from \$130,409,253 to \$121,169,153.
- Received an [A- S&P Global Rating](#).
- Received an unmodified opinion for its [FY 2022 audit](#).
- Received an unmodified opinion for its [FY 2021 audit](#).
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- L&C Foundation had an asset base of [\\$18,190,256](#) in FY 2021.
- L&C Foundation had an asset base of [\\$15,901,408](#) in FY 2020.
- L&C Foundation had an asset base of [\\$15,372,679](#) in FY 2019.

#### 5.B.4

L&C derives its revenues from three primary sources: [state funding, local property taxes, and tuition and fees](#). From fiscal year 2018 to fiscal year 2020, [direct operating grants](#) from the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) increased 14.9%. L&C's fiscal year [2023 budget projects](#) that 21.2% of College revenue will be from state funds, 48.1% from local property taxes, 25.8% from tuition, and 0.8% from other sources.

L&C's three main sources of revenue are supplemented by funding from a number of other sources including [sales and service fees, facilities rental, and grants](#). Revenues generated from these areas of supplemental funding have allowed L&C to maintain a high level of budgetary support for [instructional, operational, and institutional priorities](#) identified in L&C's strategic plan. The [annual budget process](#) is a collective effort that seeks the input from administrators and managers to ensure that all departments receive adequate funding to sustain their functions and L&C's mission to provide quality educational opportunities to its district residents.

According to the [IPEDS Data Feedback Report 2021](#) L&C spent \$8,412 per full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment on instruction, while its comparison group of 33 similar community colleges spent \$6,896 per FTE enrollment. For student services, L&C spent \$2,032 per FTE enrollment and its comparison group spend \$1,682 per FTE enrollment. L&C's institutional support was \$6,015 and its comparison cohort was \$2,992 per FTE enrollment.

In addition, IPEDS Data Feedback Reports have shown that L&C has:

- Outperformed its peer institutions on [part-time student and full-time student retention rates](#).
- Outperformed its peer institutions on [normal time, 150% normal time, and 200% normal time graduation rates](#).

L&C's financial stewardship can be attributed to a combination of [future financial planning, sustainable campus practices](#), and entrepreneurial leadership through consortial partnerships such as the [Illinois Green Energy Network](#) and the [Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois](#). [Grant funding](#) has also been instrumental in providing an additional revenue stream for supporting Key Directions within L&C's Strategic Plan.

Physical Infrastructure in Support of Educational Purposes:

Since 2013, L&C has invested over [\\$54 million dollars](#) on campus construction and renovation projects and has invested over [\\$220,000 in professional development](#) funds since 2017. The 2021 ICCB Recognition Report "[recognized](#)" L&C as meeting the instructional, administrative, financial, facility, and equipment standards established by Illinois Community College Board (ICCB).

In 2022 it was announced that L&C would be granted [\\$37.5 million](#), including an additional \$12.5 million match from L&C, for the renovation of its main complex. L&C's Main Complex includes five historic buildings totaling approximately 170,000 square feet. Contained within that space are a number of classrooms and student service areas, including the library, bookstore, enrollment services, financial aid, and more.

Planned renovations include mechanical, electrical, and plumbing upgrades; health and life safety improvements; the replacement of the fire suppression and fire alarm systems; ADA, lighting and elevator upgrades; interior finishes; upgrades to the roofing systems, windows, and building envelopes; foundation waterproofing; and a new [air purification system](#). In the summer of 2022, L&C invested over \$80,000 to purchase new [collaborative learning furniture](#) for the library.

[Future infrastructure projects](#) are submitted annually to the Illinois Community College Board through the Resource Allocation and Management Program (RAMP) document.

Technology Infrastructure in Support of Educational Purposes:

[L&C's Information Technology Strategic Plan](#) has been instrumental with assuring future technology needs are carefully planned for and budgeted. Nine goals were identified in the current technology plan, and all have been accomplished or will be in the near future.

Technology Plan Goals:

1. Backup of user computers.
2. Password reset software.
3. Interconnect all campuses.
4. [Increase internet bandwidth](#).
5. Upgrade to Windows 10.
6. Use text messaging to communicate with students.
7. Prevent security breaches - HIPAA, FERPA.
8. Continue network infrastructure upgrades.
9. Spam prevention.

Understanding the technology needs of team members and students is important to L&C. Working with the institutional research office, the information technology department used [surveys](#) to assess L&C's ability to support remote working and learning during the Covid pandemic. Feedback received from these surveys was used to make [purchase additional laptops](#), upgrade campus [WIFI and WIFI hotspots](#), and create [virtual classrooms](#) that support synchronous face-to-face and remote instruction.

L&C has also made significant investments in software platforms to improve work efficiency and communication. [Ellucian CRM \(Customer Relationship Management\) Recruit](#) was introduced in 2019 as a tool to elevate L&C's enrollment capabilities with data-driven practices. [Blackboard Collaborate](#) was also integrated in 2019 to tool for faculty to conduct virtual instruction, in addition to using Zoom.

In spite of a [ransomware attack](#) that caused L&C to temporarily close in November 2021, L&C was able to quickly resume its normal operations within two weeks. The responsiveness of L&C's technology team was recognized by outside consultants that were flown in to help L&C in its recovery.

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## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

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

### Argument

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#### 5.C.1

Using tested and disciplined methods, L&C regularly engages in strategic and operational planning resulting in the alignment of the allocation of institutional resources. At the institutional level, strategic planning is conducted using an inclusive process that emphasizes the strategic alignment of the mission, core values, and vision with [key directions and aspirations](#). Identification and assessment measures for each aspiration (goal) are established by strategic plan mover teams. Mover team membership is open to any team member who wishes to participate by completing an [Aspiration Mover Team Interest Form](#). L&C's strategic planning model values shared governance and gives voice to all team members to express their opinions about institutional priorities.

To support its student learning mission, L&C made a significant investment to develop a [state-of-the-art technology infrastructure](#) that provides data-driven assessment of student learning. Central to this architecture is the Blackboard Analytics data warehouse. The data warehouse serves as a data repository, housing fact and dimension tables related to student characteristics, enrollment, and grades from the Colleague Student Information System (SIS). Calculated student success measures, including retention and graduation counts, are also able to be identified in Blackboard Analytics.

#### 5.C.2

The assessment of innovative [student learning initiatives](#) has been practiced at L&C for many years. The overarching mission of the Student Success Team is to provide a forum to propose, pilot, and assess innovative strategies targeted to increase student learning, success, and retention. In this capacity, the Student Success Team serves as an in-house think tank. Team members consist of administrators, faculty, and staff and are encouraged to be entrepreneurial with their thoughts and vigilant in their awareness to seek new ideas discovered through colleagues, professional organizations, and educational literature.

One example of the linkage of student learning assessment with operations, planning, and budgeting is the establishment of L&C's [Student Success Center](#). Before the inception of the Student Success Center, tutoring at L&C was limited, and not institutionally funded as its own department. After two years of data collection, it was discovered that tutored students had [higher fall-to-fall retention rates, and higher GPAs](#) than L&C's general student population. This assessment was shared with campus leadership, who made the decision to establish the Student Success Center with its own [funding line item](#) in the budget.

Scalability of student learning assessment has also been a priority at L&C. L&C has invested in a technology platform that has been expanded to assess the impact of student services upon grades, retention, and completion.

Using student ID cards that can be "swiped", usage of student services is connected with student data in the Student Information System (SIS) for individual students. These student services usage data can be retrieved from the Blackboard Analytics data warehouse to discern correlations between the student services and grades, retention, and completion. Currently, [27 student support services](#) are being tracked on L&C's two campuses. L&C has been invited to share its model for student learning assessment and student support services in many conferences, including the [Carnegie Conference](#) and the [University of Illinois Data Summit](#).

Another example in L&C's response to remote learning in a COVID-19 environment. L&C assessed the needs for new modes of instruction, budgeted funds to acquire technology to support [new modes of instruction](#) and offered [new online services](#) to support remote learning during this transition.

L&C's strategic planning process applies inclusive and disciplined methods to ensure that all major constituencies (students, team members, board, community, etc.) are engaged in the process; that there is close alignment between the mission-vision-values and the plan's recommendations in the form of goals and strategies; and that these recommendations are within the College's capabilities and resources to execute.

Assessment of student learning has been an institutional priority for several years. The process of assessment has been a collaborative process among faculty, academic affairs officers, and the institutional research department. Assessment takes place on several fronts at L&C: [course level](#), [program level](#), [general education](#), and through Annual Performance Objectives (APO). APOs are research initiatives undertaken by faculty - with the support of institutional research - to discern strategies for improving student learning. All full-time faculty are required to complete an APO, either as an [individual](#) or [collaboratively](#) as a team. APO teams are invited annually to present their research findings through a poster session offered during in-service week in August. In 2022, the APO was replaced by the [Faculty Annual Reflection](#) (FAR).

The sharing of assessment data is integrally linked with L&C leadership to inform the annual budget process. The overarching purpose of this budget model is to ensure that funds are sufficiently appropriated to support current and new programs, student support services, and instructional materials. This model also ensures L&C's ability to respond to changing environmental factors such as regional labor market demand and the COVID-19 pandemic. Recent examples of new initiatives include the [pharmacy technician and diesel technology](#) programs, subscription to the [Films on Demand](#) database to support increased remote learning, and an incentive program to additionally compensate faculty that incorporate [Open Educational Resources](#) within their courses. L&C's Institutional Research Offices also compile an annual [Student Enrollment and Fact Book](#) that provides detailed [enrollment](#), [student success](#), [faculty](#), and [district demographic](#) data.

L&C's data-driven approach to improving student success is supported by a state-of-the-art technology infrastructure. In 2012, a [data warehouse](#) was created providing the ability of institutional researchers to quickly retrieve student success and retention information through the use of a reporting tool. This capability has had significant impact upon L&C's entrepreneurial culture for seeking new student success initiatives that would otherwise be too difficult or time consuming to measure for assessment.

### 5.C.3

L&C's commitment to shared governance requires regularly seeking the feedback of both internal and external constituencies. In 2020, L&C purchased a subscription to the Jotform survey service to improve its capabilities to gather feedback from internal and external groups. Examples of recent surveys include strategic planning, remote learning, and employer satisfaction of recently graduated students. Survey design and assessment are coordinated by the Institutional Research Office.

Results of Recent Surveys:

- [Strategic Planning Survey of Core Values - 2021](#)
- [Remote Learning Student Survey - 2020](#)
- [Remote Learning Student Survey - 2021](#)
- [Team Member Recruitment Survey - 2021](#)
- [Foundation Board Strategic Plan Survey - 2019](#)



- [Strategic Planning Survey of the Community - 2021](#)
- [Strategic Planning Survey of Team Members - 2020](#)
- [Strategic Planning Survey of Students - 2021](#)
- [Adjunct Faculty Survey - 2021](#)
- [Employer Satisfaction Survey - 2021](#)
- [Student Feedback Provided at Board of Trustees Dinner - 2022](#)
- [L&C Culture and DEI Survey 2022](#)

L&C's strategic plan has been purposefully modeled to encourage the recommendations of both internal and external constituencies. Key directions in the strategic plan were identified from feedback received from students, team members, board members, and the community. Mover teams in the strategic plan are charged with coordinating aspirations associated with each key direction. [Mover team participation](#) is open to all L&C team members. [Mover team membership](#) includes all employee classifications and departments.

Another important facet of L&C's strategic planning process is its commitment to integrating diversity, equity, and inclusiveness within the institution. The [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence Blueprint](#) identifies five objectives that are connected with the key directions of L&C's strategic plan.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence Blueprint objectives:

1. Implement shared definitions of diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence.
2. Increase DEI-related communication, training, and professional development.
3. Strengthen recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and retention practices which address and advance DEI.
4. Work towards eliminating student equity gaps.
5. Build capacity for all team members to prioritize DEI work.

#### 5.C.4

L&C's financial planning and budget development process is comprehensive, inclusive, and informed by reliable data and analysis. [Financial projections](#) are based on historical run rates, anticipated revenues from state and local funding, restricted funds for capital or grants, tuition and fees, and planned operational and capital expenditures over the next 3-5 years.

Enrollment projections based upon [historical trend data](#), regional demographic data, and district high school [senior class enrollments](#) are shared to inform the budget preparation process. Managers are strongly encouraged to engage their team members in the [budget planning](#) and decision processes. [Regional economic data](#) is regularly reviewed through reports generated from L&C's subscription to Emsi Analyst, a real-time database that provides labor market and economic data specific to L&C's district counties.

Financial and budget planning is an ongoing process that is frequently revisited and reviewed by the president and his leadership team. L&C's prudent approach to fiscal planning has been an integral factor in its ability maintain a [Total Composite Financial Indicator Score](#) (excluding GASB) of 4.72 and a [Primary Reserve Composite Financial Indicator Score](#) (excluding GASB) of 1.71 in 2022.

#### 5.C.5

The model for strategic planning at L&C has been crafted to be responsive to unforeseen environmental factors. Key directions, which form the institutional priorities for L&C, are led by groups of team members who are charged to meet on a regular basis to discuss the progress of [aspirations](#) associated with each key direction. These teams may also suggest new issues related to sustainability, student success, research, campus engagement, human resources, enrollment, communications, program development, finance, and technology.

A recent example of L&C's ability to pivot in response to changing environmental factors was the introduction of hybrid modalities of instruction during the Covid pandemic. In addition to traditional face-to-face, online, and web-blended modes of instruction, L&C created two new modalities to sustain quality instruction while keeping students safe.

- Virtual Class Meetings (VCM). Classes meet during regularly scheduled class times through a virtual meeting platform such as Collaborate or Zoom.
- Virtual Blended Classes (VBC). Classes meet during regularly scheduled class times through a virtual meeting platform such as Collaborate or Zoom and meet on an L&C campus to complete any mandatory course work that cannot be completed virtually (i.e. labs/studio/clinical/field experience or work).

Recently a sixth mode of instruction has been created to address the increasing demand for more flexible modes of instruction. [Blendflex](#), is a synchronous course modality that provides an option for a student to pivot between face-to-face and remote learning.

The nimbleness to offer three new modes of instruction - Virtual Class Meetings, Virtual Blended Classes and Blendflex classes - within a two-year window would not have been possible without the foresight and planning incorporated within L&C's [Information Technology Strategic Plan](#).

Another recent example of improving budgetary needs analysis is the realignment of the [program review process](#). Until recently, the two-day schedule for program review was conducted in May. Concurrently, the deadline for submitting priority budget requests at L&C is April 30<sup>th</sup>. As a consequence, funding needs identified through the program review process could not be addressed until the following fiscal year. By realigning the program review schedule, program coordinators now have time to submit priority budget requests by the April 30th deadline.

College expenses are monitored daily by the finance department. [Controls](#) are in place to ensure that accounting and budget policies and procedures are maintained for all purchasing transactions. The accounting department reviews monthly departmental and program unit expenses to ensure they are within the prescribed budget for that particular month and year-to-date.

#### 5.C.6

L&C has made an institutional commitment to leverage evidence to support data-driven decision making. This effort has required an investment in both technology resources and personnel and has touched all administrative units of L&C.

With respect to technology, L&C has created a network infrastructure using a [Blackboard Analytics](#) data warehouse that imports data from the Colleague Student Information System (SIS) to be searched using a business reporting tool. Complex, time-consuming queries using multiple variables can be quickly searched with this analytics technology. The result is the ability to deep mine L&C's SIS to discover and track data otherwise unknown with flat data files.

Evidence to inform decisions related to student success is regularly used by team members through their participation on the [Student Success Team](#) (SST). SST membership includes team members who are interested in proposing strategies to improve teaching and student success. A recent example of the SST's work is better understanding of [student learning by modality](#) during the Covid pandemic.

To assist the program coordinators for their annual program review required by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), the institutional research office at L&C [populates data fields](#) for each programs data form. This service helps maintain uniformity in data collection methods, providing for more accurate assessment when comparing different programs.

In addition to [annual program reviews](#) as required by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), L&C also conducts an [annual program - level assessment](#) which was recommended by the HLC in the review of L&C's 2016 Assurance Argument. An [Interim Report from L&C](#) to the HLC was submitted and subsequently approved that provided evidence demonstrating the implementation of a program-level assessment for CTE programs, distinct from the program review process required by the ICCB.

There are many examples where L&C's assessment process has affected change – both in policy and instruction. With respect to policy, it was identified that a [2.7 GPA was a pivotal indicator](#) in predicting a student's success in an online course. This information was used to create the policy that a student must have an established GPA of

2.7 to enroll in an online course.

In terms of instruction, it has been discovered through our assessment pilots that contextualizing certain college-level courses with built-in support provides an opportunity for underprepared students to accelerate through a developmental course sequence. Another strategy for accelerating students through developmental courses has been corequisite instruction through L&C's adoption of the Complete College America model. Data collected since the inception of the program in 2017 has demonstrated that corequisite instruction for developmental English and math students has improved completion of English and math courses.

- [Complete College America data 2017](#)
- [Complete College America data 2018](#)
- [Complete College America data 2019](#)
- [Complete College America data 2020](#)
- [Complete College America data 2021](#)
- [Complete College America data 2022](#)

The College's efforts to improve performance are systematic and continuing, not random and episodic. L&C's mission and values are routinely referenced and reinforced in communications with students, family members, team members, board members, the foundation, community leaders, and other stakeholders. With the implementation of the new strategic plan, a [culture survey](#) for assessing climate was recently disseminated to all L&C team members. A culture survey for students is currently being developed and is planned to be distributed in the spring of 2023.

Additional evidence of operational performance on an institutional level can be found in [L&C's 2021 Economic Impact Study](#) undertaken by the Center for Governmental Studies at Northern Illinois University. The study provides evidence of L&C's positive economic impact upon both [students](#) and [regional stakeholders](#). L&C's success in continually providing the resources needed to fulfill and advance its mission is predicated upon its ability to foster a campus culture that embraces data-driven decision making. L&C is committed to leveraging the use of data as evidence to improve both operational and student-centered performance indicators. Below are links to current planning documents with specific goals:

- [Enrollment Management Plan](#)
- [Marketing Plan Goals.](#)
- [Higher Learning Commission Persistence and Completion Academy Goals.](#)
- [L&C goals for retention, persistence, completion, and enrollment.](#)
- [Strategic plan goals 2022 - 2025.](#)

Examples of assessment of student learning and outcomes.

- [General education assessment report.](#)
- [Assessment of Complete College America for developmental math and English.](#)
- [Annual Performance Objectives \(APOs\) for assessment of student learning.](#)
- [Assessment of student learning in gatekeeper courses.](#)
- [Assessment of learning for underrepresented student groups.](#)
- [Assessment of career and technical programs.](#)
- [Assessment of humanities and fine arts programs.](#)
- [Assessment of co-curricular activities.](#)
- [Assessment of student learning for at-risk student cohorts.](#)
- [Assessment of the library's impact upon student learning.](#)
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- [IPEDS part-time retention rates for L&C.](#)
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## 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

### Summary

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L&C is committed to a shared governance model for strategic planning and assessment. This approach ensures that all of the institution's voices are heard, reducing information silos and encouraging feedback regarding the institution's priorities.

The following are selected examples of L&C's strategic planning model that support the institution's ability to successfully plan to ensure that resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

- Strategic and financial planning are connected.
- Total Composite Financial Indicator Scores that are consistently "Above the Zone".
- Three consecutive years of lowering the institution's debt.
- Unmodified opinions are consistently received on annual audits.
- Balanced budgets are consistently achieved.
- Successful upgrade of internet bandwidth.
- Introduction of new programs of study.
- Institutional commitment to data-driven decision making with its Blackboard Analytics data warehouse.
- Implementation of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform for enrollment management.
- Ability to maintain College operations after a ransomware attack.
- Ability to quickly offer new remote modalities for instruction in response to Covid.
- Year-over-year IPEDS Feedback Reports showing that L&C is outperforming its peer institutions on retention rates.
- Year-over-year IPEDS Feedback Report showing that L&C is outperforming its peer institutions on completion rates.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*