

Report to the
Faculty, Administration, Trustees, Students

of

THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Norwich, Connecticut

by

An Evaluation Team representing the
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
of the
New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Prepared after study of the institution's
self-evaluation report and a visit to the College
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Members of the team:

Chairperson: Dr Robert Pura, President, Greenfield Community College, Greenfield, MA

Dr. Tala Khudairi M. Sc., Fulbright Scholar, Dean, Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (S.T.E.M), Roxbury Community College, Boston, MA

Dr. Flo Maria Lucci, Professor of Management/Marketing, Quinsigamond Community College, Worcester, MA

Ms. Valerie J. Mahar, Vice President Student Affairs & Community Relations, River Valley Community College, Claremont, NH

Ms. Ann McDonald, Executive Vice President, Mt. Wachusett Community College, Gardner, MA

Dr. S. Leonard Mhlaba, College of Professional Studies, Northeastern University, Boston, MA

Dr. Janet Sortor, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Southern Maine Community College, South Portland, ME

Mr. David Sturges, Library Director, Vermont Technical College, Randolph Center, VT

This report represents the views of the evaluation committee as interpreted by the chairperson. Its content is based on the committee's evaluation of the institution with respect to the Commission's criteria for accreditation. It is a confidential document in which all comments are made in good faith. The report is prepared both as an educational service to the institution and to assist the Commission in making a decision about the institution's accreditation status.

Introduction

According to the NEASC mission, The New England Association of Schools and Colleges, a self-regulatory membership organization, serves the public and educational community by developing and applying standards assessing the educational effectiveness of elementary, secondary, and collegiate educational institutions. Processes of self-evaluation and peer review utilizing the Association's goals assure and improve the quality of institutions, which seek its accreditation. It also endeavors to inform public discourse about educational improvement.

The purpose of the visit to Three Rivers Community College in Connecticut was to work on behalf of NEASC to assure quality for constituents, stakeholders and the community. The visit was also about fostering improvement. The accreditation process is guided by the NEASC standards. According to NEASC those standards are "an articulation by the higher education community of what a college or university must do in order to deserve the public trust and a framework for institutional development and self-evaluation."

With that as the backdrop our team was assembled by NEASC. This team came together for the first time on Sunday evening and we developed the principles and values that were the foundation for our work. Prior to that meeting all of the NEASC visitation team had read the self-study and spent time reflecting on the College and the standards that they were asked to report on. During the visit the NEASC visiting team read all relevant internal documents, talked to as many people as was necessary and spent many hours in conversation together about what was learned. Ultimately the hope was that the visiting team's collective effort would leave TRCC with the sense that "they got who we are." Each member of this team was a volunteer who understands the importance of a peer and voluntary process.

I want to thank each member of the team for his or her commitment to NEASC and TRCC. They demonstrated that they were committed equally to hard work, honest appraisal, thoughtful analysis and integrity.

Standard 1: Mission and Purposes

Three Rivers Community College traces its origin to the Connecticut Legislature's decision to merge Mohegan Community College and Thames Valley State Technical College. In 1992, the institution was renamed Three Rivers Community College and moved to current site in 2009. The original TRCC mission statement was written in 1992 revised in 2001 and adopted the current revision in 2007.

Three Rivers Community College is an accessible, affordable and culturally diverse community college that meets varied educational needs by creating an environment that stimulates learning.

To accomplish its mission, Three Rivers Community College:

- *Offers post-secondary educational opportunities;*
- *Encourages life-long learning;*
- *Provides a well-rounded and rewarding educational experience with an emphasis on critical thinking, effective communication and the colleges institutional values;*
- *Fosters and appreciation of the natural and social sciences, humanities, technology and the arts;*
- *Helps students achieve their goals;*
- *Serves as a community resource for people and institutions within its service area;*
- *Delivers its services efficiently and measurably; and*
- *Contributes to economic development of this region and the state.*

TRCC is one of the twelve colleges of the Connecticut Community College system. The TRCC mission is consistent with the mission of that larger statewide system which states:

The 12 two-year public colleges that comprise the System of Connecticut Community Colleges share a mission to make excellence and the opportunity for lifelong learning affordable and accessible to all Connecticut citizens. The colleges seek to enrich the intellectual, cultural and social environments of the communities they serve. The colleges support the economic growth of the state and its citizens through programs that supply business and industry with a skilled, well trained work force.

The degree to which the mission and purpose of TRCC continues to guide the various educational outcomes of all degree granting academic programs and which programs will be offered remain a concern of the faculty and staff. Decisions about program offerings and the allocation of the necessary resources to maintain high academic standards in those programs is Regents based.

In the 2001 visitation report, the NEASC team identified one of TRCC's strengths as "the statement of mission and purpose is clear, and provides a guide for the institution to follow and evaluate its effectiveness." The degree in which this will remain true for this college is unfolding. The mission is concise, was approved by the governing board, undergoes periodic review and appears in appropriate publications and locations throughout the campus. In February of 2011 at a TRCC Professional Day, faculty and staff were surveyed to assess the degree in which "the mission and purposes of the institution are accepted and widely understood by its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students." Seventy Four percent (74%) of those surveyed indicated that they were very familiar.

The College's mission, purpose and goals continue to provide the basis for assessing its overall effectiveness. Faculty and staff at TRCC share deep concern however about the degree, the sustainability of the TRCC mission in the current fiscal environment and the compatibility of the TRCC with the Regents Mission.

Institutional Effectiveness

There is a clear body of evidence that the mission drives the planning, budgeting and day to day activities of TRCC. It is clear that college faculty and staff are aware of and passionately in support of the TRCC mission.

Standard 2: Planning and Evaluation

The institution undertakes planning and evaluation to accomplish and improve the achievement of its mission and purposes. It identifies its planning and evaluation priorities and pursues them effectively.

Planning

Long term, strategic planning at TRCC occurs at myriad levels beginning at the system and ending in the departments of the institution. Planning and priority setting has been the purview of the CCC BOT, the Chancellor and the community college presidents as a part of a system-wide planning process initiated in 2002. Every five years the System develops a set of strategic priorities for all of the 12 Connecticut community colleges at system-wide BOT Presidents' Retreats. From the goals of that Strategic Plan, a Task Force of faculty and staff at TRCC developed the college's goals and invited input from the College's Regional Advisory Committee. The TRCC System Strategic Priorities and College Goals 2009-2014 and 2005-2008, for example, are five-year strategic plans based upon the strategic priorities established by the CCC for those time periods. Strategic priorities set by the System are filtered down to the college community by the President and through the executive team. Each year at an annual retreat in the summer, the executive team sets the goals for the coming year based upon the TRCC System Strategic Priorities and College Goals.

The Strategy Map, a document developed annually by Institutional Research that visualizes the College goals in a one page matrix, is derived from this planning document, as are goals for many, but not all, of the major divisions of the college, such as those of Academics, Administration, Student Services, and Continuing Education. For example, The Academic Division Goals and Action Objectives for 2009-10, 10-11, and 11-12, align directly to the TRCC College Goals and the Map. Goals and action objectives are set at the departmental level, such as the Admission's Office. There is widespread awareness across the College community-administrators, faculty and staff-of the System Strategic Plan, the College Goals, The Map, and the role each plays in informing planning at TRCC. Institutional Research is instrumental in supporting planning and evaluation at the College from The Map, to enrollment, retention, and success data, to assessment.

In response to significant changes in the organization and governance of the community college system, TRCC has initiated a new strategic planning cycle. It has convened a new Strategic Planning Steering Committee, comprised of staff and faculty from key

offices and departments, and has engaged the services of consultants to conduct a capacity and opportunity analysis. This strategic planning initiative has just begun and anticipates a System plan from the BOR.

Annual planning at TRCC, with its genesis in the College Goals and The Map, often takes place in the context of ongoing System planning. Each of the deans participates in a system-wide CCC council: Academic, Student Services, Administration, IT, and Continuing Education as do directors of key departments such as the Director of Finance. Planning decisions can require sign-off at the System level, such as capital purchases, enrollment goals, or the additional of new full-time tenure track faculty positions. TRCC is a part of the CEN (Connecticut Education Network), a system-wide technology planning and management collaboration involving all the IT directors and the then CCC BOT CIO, as well as the CITL, the council of IT deans and directors. Annual priorities, such as an upgrade of the telephone system or the Enterprise Network Project which will standardize equipment and architecture across the colleges, are set at the System level.

Evaluation

TRCC engages in evaluation at the programmatic and course levels, as well as within key divisions of the institution. Many of the evaluative systems at TRCC are state-wide CCC BOT mandated, such as the course evaluation process, graduate follow-up survey, the program review template and the faculty evaluation process. They vary in their effectiveness in gathering useful data. For example, the on-line graduation follow-up survey has a very low rate of response, 64 of 344 in 2010 and 94 of 415 in 2011. Divisions have developed annual assessments to measure College Goal achievement and to set goals for the coming academic year. Each of the deans submits an End-of-Year Report to the President that evaluates the achievement of the College's goals. The Academic Division, for example, has consistently conducted an annual assessment. The Academic Division Report for 2010-11, 2009-10, and 2008-09 are comprehensive assessments and align to the goals and action objective set by the Division each year. Academic programs are scheduled for review on a five year cycle. The most recent programs reviewed include two with external accreditation, Business and Early Childhood, its first, and Liberal Arts/General Studies, and Criminal Justice. The Program Review Tracking Summary matrix indicates that there are programs that have not been reviewed over the past eight years such as Technology Studies. Program reviews include input from external stakeholders, such as employers.

Outcome assessment has been integrated into academic programs and the general education requirements. Beginning with the Professional Day in 2011, described by one faculty as "the best professional day we've ever had," TRCC has developed a systematic plan to educate faculty and staff about outcome assessment and to assess student learning. TRCC has articulated nine learning outcomes: critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, scientific inquiry, responsible citizenship, global awareness, communication, and technology literacy. The General Education Task Force has developed rubrics; an assessment cycle that schedules artifact

collection, forming and training of assessment teams, assessment of artifacts, data analysis, dissemination to the college community, and the review of the process beginning in spring 2010 through to Spring 2013; and curriculum map that identifies courses that deliver the Gen Ed Outcomes and identifies the method of assessment. The Gen Ed Task Force Committee is poised to complete the assessment cycle by identifying benchmarks, i.e. the stated outcome, and provide feedback to faculty that informs change.

As a result of a directive from the state-wide Distance Learning Council, TRCC moved all online, and hybrid and supplemental instruction to Blackboard 9 by the fall of 2012. In anticipation of that directive, the Ed. Tech Committee at TRCC, co-chaired by the Director of Educational Technology and a faculty in the Nursing Department, developed and implemented a plan to train and support faculty in the use of the new platform, established standards for all online courses and developed an A-Z Checklist based on best practices that is used in development and review of courses and a two year evaluation model. Proposals for online courses must be approved by the Curriculum Committee which uses this assessment to inform its decision.

As indicted in Form E1, Part A and B, and the progress of departments through the assessment process varies. Many departments have developed assessment plans to measure student attainment of stated outcomes, established realistic benchmarks, and used assessment data to inform program improvement, such as Business, Childhood Education, Hospitality, Computer Science Technology, and Nursing. Other programs have yet to identify relevant evidence that assesses student learning, e.g. use of CCSSE data, or to set benchmark goals. IR has been instrumental in the development and implementation of the outcome assessment process at TRCC. From the development of rubrics, to the collection of data and its assessment, to the development of the Missions/Goals/Assessment Pyramid to explain the process to faculty and staff, IR has supported and guided the effort. The Directors philosophy that assessment "use the work that we do every day" has helped faculty understand and accept assessment as a part of the learning process. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will include assessment as a part of its mission in an effort to institutionalize and sustain the process.

Faculty at TRCC are evaluated on a periodic basis using the Faculty Development and Review Plan for the Connecticut Community Colleges. The FDRP includes a pre-conference, self-appraisal, instructional observation, student course and faculty evaluation, a post-conference for instructional observation, and an overall performance review with summary conference that culminates in professional development plan. The evaluator is a supervisor, e.g. division chair, department chair, program coordinator. Faculty found the process effective and professionally beneficial.

Institutional Effectiveness

While TRCC systematically assesses the achievement of the System Strategic Priorities and College Goals, it does not appear to have systems in place to evaluate the achievement of its mission and purposes or to determine the effectiveness of its

planning and evaluation activities on an ongoing basis across divisions and departments.

Standard 3: Organization and Governance

Website ctregents.org NewsRoom

"A new law reorganizes the state system of higher education by establishing a 19-member (including 15 voting members) Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) to serve as the governing body for the Connecticut State Universities, the Connecticut Community Colleges, and Charter Oak State College. It allows the board to appoint and remove staff responsible for its own operation and the operation of these constituent units. BOR replaces the existing Connecticut State University System and Connecticut Community College boards of trustees and the Board of State Academic Awards (BSAA) (which governs Charter Oak). The act maintains UConn's board of trustees and makes changes to the budget process for UConn and the other constituent units."

Three River Community College's organizational design is appropriate, as demonstrated in the College's Organizational Charts with lines of authority of members of the Cabinet, Academic Division, Administrative Services Division, Continuing Education, Information Technology Division, and Student Services Division; as well as the Organizational Chart from the Board of Regents. Responsibilities of the stake holders are reflected in the faculty and student handbooks, policy manuals, job descriptions, employee packets, union collective bargaining agreements and the Bylaws for Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education, and the Board of Trustees Community-Technical Colleges Policy Manual.

The Governance structure appears to be appropriate to accomplish the mission of the College, as reflected in the Internal and External Governance Committees of the College, and the Board of Regents. The structure and responsibilities of the internal governance committees and schedule for review is in the "Governance Document" updated 2010. There is a concern that the State's plan to limit developmental/remedial education may hinder student access, affecting the community college's mission. The Chairman of the BOR and members of BOR reassured the NEASC team that the BOR was committed to the mission of the College, including student access.

The College remains optimistic and committed to teaching, learning and service despite recent changes in the organizational design and governance of higher education in CT and the changes in state policy, budget constraints and decreasing resources. Budget cuts have been eliminated many personnel positions and the tasks that staff need to address, such as supporting technology infrastructure and hardware has put stress on the current system, and day-to-day function of the College and services to the students. Some of the resources are being centralized, such as the "FootPrints"-IT helpdesk, email, library, Blackboard, Banner, Website, but the College and services to the faculty and students are negatively affected through this transition. The IT Division shared that

there are frequent delays, of hours or days from the Central Office to respond back to the College to address problems; where before, the response was immediate. It appears that some of the departments and divisions work well together and communicate effectively (e.g. IT staff communicate with walkie-talkies, to communicate priorities; all members of Nursing Department attend all required meetings and are accountable to the department chair); however there appears to be lack of effective communication college-wide, and information regarding the decision process.

Recent organizational changes have placed The Board of Regents of Higher Education (BOR) as the governing body for the regional community-technical college system, the Connecticut State University System and Charter Oak State College (ConnSCU) the specific powers and duties of the Board are prescribed in Title 10a of the Connecticut General Statutes and in policies adopted by the Board. The membership of the Board is defined in the Bylaws of the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education, Article 1 Section #2. ConnSCU consists of the Executive Staff; President/CEO of the BOR (who recently resigned and has been replaced by an interim), appointed by the Governor; Executive Vice President (who recently resigned); VP for State Universities; VP for Community Colleges; the 17 college and university presidents (President Council) report directly to the President. The ConnSCU Leadership Team works with the campus leaders, faculty, staff and students. The Board has governance responsibilities; sets statewide tuition and student fee policies; establishes financial aid policies; reviews and recommends any new academic programs; in collaboration with the institutional stakeholders, conducts searches for and selects campus presidents; and holds broad responsibilities for development and coordination of statewide higher education policy.

New initiatives from the state governor and legislators include: Implementing Statewide Transfer and Articulation Reform; and the P-20 Initiative – Decrease in Developmental Education (Remediation) courses at the Community College – students will only be able to take one semester of developmental education course(s) and the second semester take an embedded-course with tutoring support. While the intent is to accelerate readiness for college-level courses with the goal of student success, there is concern that this will impact the community college's mission of accessibility.

The internal organization structure, decision-making process across the College (at the department, division, management and cabinet levels) and policies (BOT Community-Technical College Policy Manual, Governance Document (updated 2010), the Three Rivers Community College System Strategic Priorities and College Goals 2009-2014 and the Strategy Map (2009-2014) are clear and consistent with the mission of the College and support institutional effectiveness. The "NEASC Organization & Governance Survey" was sent to the College Community in February 2011 to quantitatively and qualitatively assess the effectiveness of the organization and governance structure of the college in response to concerns raised in the NEASC the 2002 Comprehensive and 2007 Fifth Year reports. The survey results were used in the 2012 NEASC Self Study.

The majority of the college community (administrators, faculty, staff and students) actively participate in the Governance system at the College. The College community communicates formally through meetings to convey information, approve policies, curricular changes, etc. Issues and items are addressed in appropriate committees (Governance Document). Minutes of the various divisions and committees including Cabinet are made available and shared. Members of the College shared that while there are structures in place for effective communication, it is only apparent within most of the internal governance committees, e.g. Governance Council, Curriculum Committee. There remains both a lack of communication from the ConnSCU to the College community as well as from Administration to the College Community. This could be because faculty roles are often participatory and advisory; they cannot vote and therefore do not share in the decision making. The President is the sole, final decision maker at the College.

BOR members are required to complete a "Conflict of Interest" statement, and none of them have any financial interest in the College. The BOR does understand and supports the mission and purpose of the community colleges. The BOR intends to develop their own Policy Manual (through the Administration Committee, Finance Committee and other BOR Committees), and create an Evaluation Plan of the BOR, most likely through a third party, an external evaluator that would also gather information from the stakeholders (similar to a 360 degree review.) It is not apparent (no evidence) that the BOT has reviewed itself in the past. Until the BOR develops its own policy manual, the College will follow/adhere to the existing BOT Policy Manual. The College does participate in the Governance structure of the System through a faculty member and a student representative. TRCC staff are also members of the ConnSCU Councils (of Academic Deans, Information Technology Deans, Finance Deans, etc...). The minutes of all the BOR meetings are publically disclosed on the BOR website. The roles and functions of the BOR standing and special committees and ConnSCU are defined and carried out through meetings.

Annually in the spring, up until 2011, the Chancellor of the BOT evaluated the Presidents of the Community Colleges, using a form with items to be addressed: College Profile, Strategic Priorities, System Strategic Goals, College Review, President Goals and President Contributions. The form was completed and submitted by President Jones. She did not receive an evaluation form from the new BOR in 2012. President Grace Jones has led Three Rivers Community College since 2001, and is on the Council of Presidents. Her duties and responsibilities are described in Community-Technical Colleges of CT, Policy Manual: Board of Trustees, March 2010. According to the BOT Policy Manual, the President of the Community College is the chief executive officer of the college and reports and recommends to the chancellor of the BOT (which is now the Interim President of ConnSCU, BOR). President Jones works closely with her Cabinet, to support the mission and priorities of the College, manage the College and the budget, allocate resources, hire employees, support its mission, communicate regularly and "prepare an annual report for the BOT revealing the strengths, weaknesses, needs and limitations of the preceding year of operation and provides recommendations for future action and planning." The Cabinet communicates with the

college community (faculty, staff and students), formally and informally, and through governance meetings, issues are addressed and resolved.

TRCC Governance Committees

The internal governance of the College has representative members across the College, and is comprised of the following:

- President Cabinet which manages the day-to-day activities on campus is comprised of Dean of Academic Affairs, Dean of Administration, Dean of Student Services, Associate Dean of Continuing Education, Director of Human Resources, Director of Institutional Advancement, Dean of IT, Chair of Governance Council, as well as collaborate with their respective Councils across ConnSCU, and communicate BOR policy back to the Cabinet and to members in their respective Divisions. The ConnSCU Leadership Team provides directives to members of the Councils and the communication tends to be more one-way at the time being. Cabinet members shared that they are looking forward to more dialogue with their ConnSCU Leaders to convey the concerns of the College. The roles and responsibilities of the Cabinet are in the College's Governance Document 2010,
- Governance Council is comprised of representatives from each division, a student, and the Chair serves on the Cabinet.
- Academic Division is comprised of faculty, staff and the Academic Dean. According to the Faculty Handbook, August 2012: "The division meeting will serve as a steering mechanism to the Governance Committee, the Curriculum Committee and can recommend the creation of a task force. It will also serve as a vehicle for calendar recommendations to the Governance Committee."

Other committees include:

- Information Technology, which includes the Library.
- Student Services Division
- Student Government

External Governance committees include:

- Regional Advisory Council (RAC) with 16 community members from business and utilities, etc., which work collaboratively with the College, to employ students, provide them with internships, as well as send their employees to TRCC for education and training.
- Program Advisory Boards
- Foundation / Board of Directors
- Alumni Association, that works toward providing scholarships for students.

Institutional Effectiveness

The institutional organization is not reviewed periodically; however the internal governance system the College has been recently reviewed for improvement and is scheduled for a systematic review every five years.

Standard 4: The Academic Program

Undergraduate Degree Programs

TRCC is a comprehensive institution of higher education, offering 42 certificate programs and 45 associate degrees to an increasingly diverse student population. In the 2012 academic year, the College graduated 546 students, 82 with certificates and the balance of 464 with associate degrees. Degrees require at least 60 semester credits, 25% of which must be in General Education. There is a 25% residency requirement, meaning that a student can transfer up to 45 credits to TRCC and earn a TRCC Associate degree. Formerly composed of two campuses in two different areas of the City of Norwich, the College completed construction of a new single campus and began functioning in its new surroundings in 2009.

Over the last three years alone, the College has added several new degree and certificate program, including Visual Fine Arts, Exercise Science, and Pathways to Teaching. In the spring of 2012, the Connecticut state Board of Regents approved two new programs: an eCommerce degree and Certificate, and a Sports and Leisure Management degree. The College has several programs that are externally accredited: TAC/ABET accredits Civil, Electrical, Environmental, Manufacturing, Mechanical, and Nuclear Engineering Technology. In the 2012 reaccreditation, TAC/ABET approved three for re-accreditation and three are working on suggested improvements. The Nursing Program had its most recent re-accreditation visit by NLNAC in 2010 and was successfully reaccredited. The most recent re-accreditation visit by ACBSP was in 2011 and covered Accounting Career, Accounting Transfer, Business Administration, Business Information Systems Option, Business Administration Transfer, Business Administration Management, Business Office Technology, Hospitality Management Casino, Hospitality Management Hotel, Hospitality Management Restaurant, and Marketing. The Early Childhood program has applied for and had an accreditation visit from NAEYC.

The academic programs are consistent with the mission of the College which includes accessibility to a wide range of students in its catchment area, affordable tuition and fees and responsiveness to academic and career needs of its students. The College has a variety of programs to meet unique students' needs: opportunities for students to earn credit for what they have learned out of college through the APL process; joint admission to four-year colleges and universities for students with predetermined grade points; special advisors called Phase I Advisors for students who need special attention to help them complete developmental courses, and so forth. Although most of the College's degrees are in career fields such as business, nursing, and technology, the College does offer some liberal arts associate degree programs and courses that are typically available to students in four-year colleges and universities. These include AS in Liberal Arts & Science and AS in General Studies.

Academic oversight is achieved through the work of the Curriculum Committee that is made up of a cross-section of the College faculty and staff and is chaired by the chief

academic officer. Program or course changes emanate from a department and are vetted internally before being submitted to the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee is also the primary vehicle by which the College ensures that proposed courses or programs pass the test of consistency with the mission, values and policies of the College. Each proposal submitted to the Curriculum Committee must satisfy submission requirements of the Academic Program Planning and Approval Guide and must include student learning outcomes, the relevancy of those outcomes to the skill needs of students and area employers and a clear statement of how these outcomes are to be assessed. There are several examples of assessment listed in the Appendix of the Self-Study, including Educational Effectiveness Indicators for General Education, Accounting, Engineering Technology, and so forth. General Education has eight outcomes to assess. In order to assess selected Gen Ed outcomes, an Assessment Task Force created, normed, and tested Rubrics for selected General Education outcomes. Writing samples and other indicators were collected and analyzed by trained teams. Results of this assessment were used to improve instructional effectiveness and to better correlate program goals and student learning outcomes.

Distance Education, an area of concern raised in 2008, is now a well-developed mode of instruction, with 182 Online FTE and 44 out of 720 sections (6% of all course sections) being offered 100% Online. The College has increased the percentage of faculty who are full-time to 66% from 61% in 2009.

Three Rivers Community College offers courses in four modes of instruction: on ground, hybrid, online with campus requirement and 100% online. In the Spring of 2011, the College listed five sections offered in what it termed "Cooperative Learning;" five sections as Hybrid; twenty five (25) sections as Independent Study; sixteen sections as Internships; and ten sections Online. The College has invested in improving academic quality and improving the services provided to students in Distance Education courses and has successfully applied to NEASC to have its Distance Education included in the Commission's Comprehensive evaluation for reaccreditation in 2012. Along with offering instruction in several modes, the College provides several ways for students to demonstrate knowledge equivalent to specific program courses. Students can accelerate degree completion, can begin courses at different times in the course of the year, or take courses in a compressed semester. In the event that a program has to be phased out, typically due to low enrollments, students in the program are given time to complete their studies under the terms of their original catalog.

General Education

At TRCC, undergraduate programs are structured to give students introduction to a broad range of areas of human knowledge, to help them explore areas of possible career focus and preparation for transfer to four-year colleges or universities, or entry level jobs. General Education core addresses the following eight competencies: Quantitative Reasoning, Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Scientific Inquiry, Global Awareness, Communication, Technology Literacy and Responsible Citizenship

The College is vigilant in its award of certificates and degrees. All requirements for graduation are clearly stated in the most recent catalog, 2010-2011, and other College documents. The College awards credits for nationally standardized, competency-based examinations, portfolio assessment, and experiential learning, such as the Assessment of Prior Learning (APL). Because of its popularity among students, the APL is governed by a Board made up of TRCC faculty and staff who determine the amount of credit to be awarded and the discipline in which the credits are to be assigned. According to the Self-Study, students may earn up to 39 credits through portfolio assessment, but no more than 50% of credits towards a certificate or degree may be earned through non-traditional instruction. Every course section has a syllabus prepared in accordance with a college template and the grading rubric is clearly articulated. When courses are offered in fractions of a standard semester, care is taken to ensure that contact hours for each credit are not compromised.

Assessment of Student Learning

Three Rivers Community College participates in the many established assessment protocols such as regularly scheduled program reviews, outside accreditation evaluations, CCSSE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement), various surveys, and formal data collection and analysis typically found in annual fact books. Other forms of academic oversight include student evaluations of faculty, evaluation of faculty by their supervisors, program assessment, and program or course reviews. The Self-Study describes a 2010 assessment of a Writing course which led to required professional development workshops for Writing Faculty to ensure consistency in instructional quality and student learning outcomes. All degree programs are required to complete a Plan of Study Form that lists the degree, required credits, transfer credits, courses to be taken and the sequence of those courses. The Form does not, however, provide a list of pre-requisites. All degree and certificate programs listed in the most recent catalog available, 2010-2011, include program objectives and all listed courses include pre-requisites, where applicable.

The College's commitment to educational technology and its uses to enhance student learning is evidenced by the existence of an Information Technology Department headed by a dean, a director of Distance Learning and an Education Technology Committee. Before students are enrolled in an online course, they must complete a self-assessment to determine if this mode of instruction suits them. Other technology resources support faculty, for example those aimed at helping faculty learn best practices in pedagogy utilizing Blackboard.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

TRCC now offers courses partially or fully online. In order to ensure the integrity of grades for online courses, the College offers professional development programs to help online instructors prevent unearned grades. One of the ways is to give students many opportunities to demonstrate what they are learning throughout the semester. The instructor is, thus, better able to tell if a student hands in work that is not his or her own.

A random audit of syllabi dating back to 2008 revealed that syllabi seemed to be in order and meet the credit hour requirements.

Institutional Effectiveness

TRCC has several tools for assessing its effectiveness. The College continues to participate in CCSSE in order to determine how programs and services are meeting the needs of students. Through the Office of Institutional Research, the College has devised a model, called The Map that helps all units of the College to rate their performance against the College 2009-2014 Strategic Plan.

Standard 5: Faculty

Three Rivers Community College faculties contribute to the mission of the College both in academic teaching and learning as well as by contributing to the campus as a whole through college service activities. As of 2009, the campus faculty is now all located in one campus location but fall under two collective bargaining agreements. Fifty (50) full-time members are in the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges (4 C's) and 28 full-time members remain in the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). All full-time faculties possess a minimum of a master's degree and 10% hold doctoral degrees. All but one faculty members have master's degrees and the majority has discipline-specific graduate degrees. One faculty member in the electrical engineering area has a bachelor's degree.

Part-time faculty is integral to meeting the mission of the College specifically in recent years as the enrollment has grown so rapidly. Part-time faculty is represented by another Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). There are two collective bargaining units for faculty. Historically, there were equity issues between contracts. At this time agreements have been aligned as far as compensation and workload issues and the uniformity has decreased issues. TRCC has also appointed faculty via special one-year appointments.

Faculty meet together each month for two hours at the Academic Meeting, This academic year (2012), faculty implemented a change in meeting structure that has allowed for a more positive and professional meeting culture. However, on a regular basis only about 40 members attend when there are 70-80 full-time faculty members. There is no attendance taken and members who actively attend stated that it was difficult to stay motivated when administration isn't holding all faculties to the same standard. Faculty voiced confusion as to how they both receive and communicate information and how they get college wide strategic information that may impact their job performance. An example was that the current status of Connecticut politics and how this would reshape the entire curriculum in one department. This faculty member stated that although they will be working hard to re-align based on those new mandates, no one from administration has communicated with the department about these

publicized changes. This creates frustration as well as a feeling of lack of respect for the faculty member's area.

Three Rivers Community College has experienced tremendous growth in the last several years. Their enrollment increase by headcount is 36% going from 3,793 in the fall of 2006 to 5,161 in the fall of 2010. The number of full-time faculty has not kept pace with this growth. The College has dealt with this issue by using special one-year non-tenured track special appointments, which have increased from 7 one-year appointments in 2006 to 23 one-year appointments in 2010. This represents almost 1/3 of the full-time faculty. The number of English faculty has decreased, from 10 FT in 2010, 12 FT in 2011 and 8 FT in 2012. PT numbers have increased from 36 in 2010 to 45 in 2011, to 58 in 2012. The Engineering Department had 17 full-time faculty in 2010, 16 in 2011, and 13 in 2012 with a gradual increase in part-time faculty in those three respective years.

Part-time faculty is encouraged to engage in the campus environment as much as possible. They are provided a common office space with cubicles and access to resources and have been included in all professional development activities and college events in general. Many adjuncts handle high demand courses which are primarily in the area of English, Math, Gateway, and the Social Sciences.

Contractually, faculty has a choice to either teach a 5th course or perform college service. The Academic Dean confirmed that most faculty members would prefer to do college service. They also provide a mentorship program for adjunct faculty which was created out of Title III monies. They hold 2 adjunct faculty orientations each semester. The Academic Dean's office also has one full-time staff member dedicated to assisting adjuncts to acclimate to the campus environment and triage any services or resources they may be seeking. Some adjunct faculty do engage in college service when possible and they are invited to all activities. While meeting with student groups, some students did complain that access to adjunct faculty is not as readily available as full-time faculty.

Faculty salaries are competitive and the two collective bargaining agreements are now in line from an equity standpoint. Faculty members are normally hired at the Instructor level unless they are being brought in as a Program Coordinator in which case they would be hired at the Assistant Professor level. Faculty performance evaluations are consistent across each contract and include a self-appraisal tool within the process. Initial salaries of all faculties are similar with the exception of some candidates within the healthcare area whose salaries may be a bit higher than others. The Human Resources department confirmed the process of recruitment in which all positions are posted on the campus website as well as shared with each Connecticut college campus, targeted mailings are sent to groups such as databases of minority fellows that may have participated in fellowship programs in CT; and positions are regularly posted on www.higheredjobs.com and when a pool is deemed insufficient; they are allowed to extend the search and widen the candidate pool.

Teaching and Advising

Academic advising is done by the Student Counseling Center for incoming students for their first semester. After that one semester students are re-assigned to an academic advisor. There is inequity related to the assignment of advisees across the faculty as stated in the site report. Faculty expressed concern that it is difficult to get students to go see advisors. Adjunct faculty does not advise or register students for courses.

The Title III grant provided advising and tutoring training that has become integral to their operations. Some projects included the CFT (Center for Teaching), a group of faculty that meet periodically and share best teaching practices. The tutoring area was also able to offer 12 hour training to adjunct faculty who were paid \$500 to attend the training. A student created a TSS (Tutoring Scheduling System) which faculty felt worked better than their previous program. Another effort brought training for 17 faculty to campus for \$20,000 vs. sending separate members to conferences at a higher cost. Tutoring in general is in high demand with students often waiting for five days for tutoring, an increase from the three day wait last year.

Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity

There are approximately 40 online sections per semester. All full-time faculty members have been invited and encouraged to teach online and are allowed up to two courses per semester in order maintain present and accessible on campus.

There is a campus process to apply to teach an online course and administration asks for faculty to propose the course 6 months in advance. A best practice guide is available to support development of an online course. Online course evaluations are done electronically and based on information from the Guide, a statewide evaluation tool used by other Connecticut colleges as well. There are currently two faculty members out on sabbatical leave this academic year (2012). One faculty member is in the English/Humanities area and writing a book. The other faculty member is a nursing faculty member working on a nursing project. Sabbaticals are approved by a statewide committee that provides final approval. The Dean of Academics articulated that whenever financially possible they strive to offer these opportunities to faculty.

Institutional Effectiveness

There appears to be lack of consistency around academic oversight and internal communication issues. The process of academic program review did not clearly indicate a seamless structure for faculty to use as a guide. It was unclear who delegates the timing or assignment of academic review, a standardized format, or who receives the reports and what is done with the outcome data collected through the process.

Standard 6: Students

Consistent with its mission of being accessible, affordable and culturally diverse, TRCC endeavors to model a student-centered environment that fosters intellectual and personal development of all its students. The consolidation of two campuses was completed in 2009, when its then two facilities from different areas of the city of Norwich, CT, merged to a single, united and larger college in one location. The now collocated institution is home to a burgeoning student population of over 5,000 students as it realized a nearly 50% increase in enrollments since the facility consolidation. In spite of the dramatic growth in recent years, the institution's interactions with students and prospective students continues to be characterized by integrity as the College community seeks to collaboratively create, implement and maintain innovative strategies to meet the needs of its dynamic and diverse student body.

Admissions

TRCC enrolls a student body of over 5,100 from more than twenty-three (23) towns in and around the greater Norwich, CT area. Enrollments are broadly representative of the region's demographic diversity; in fact, 25 percent of TRCC's students self-identify as belonging to a racial group other than white, non-Hispanic (S-forms) as compared to the county where the College resides, where the same racial distribution reflects 13 percent of its citizenry. TRCC's overall demographics reflect that of a two-year college, including traditional and non-traditional age students, degree seekers, career changers, those seeking workforce training and retraining, lifelong learners enrolled in non-credit enrichment courses. Gender distributions at TRCC are typical for a comprehensive community college and reflect the diverse programs of studies that appeal to all student groups.

Student Services at TRCC is woven with academic input and supports. For example, the focus of their third-year Title III grant was 'Success by Supporting the Underprepared Student'. This initiative established a foundation from which a variety of student support services were created and implemented. Of particular note is the college's Phase 1 Program. This cross-division initiative provides high-risk, first-time college students with intensive instruction and academic supports by retention specialists and specially-trained faculty advisors. Student cohort information is being collected and outcomes data will be available in 2014. Anecdotal information, however, is informing new iterations of New Student Orientation and other retention-specific programming discussed later in this report.

TRCC's admission process is clearly outlined in the College's catalog and website. Admissions standards are consistent and clearly stated in the catalog and website, and on brochures, fliers and other college media. The institution admits students who meet the admissions requirements and who are college-ready, and/or require remedial/developmental course work to fortify their readiness for college-level programming. myCommdotnet – TRCC's student portal—provides students access to their academic and financial records, and allows them to register for courses, check schedules, accept

Financial Aid, and access the library databases off campus. In spite of this electronic and 24/7 student information system, student utilization is low representing about 36% of the student body.

TRCC assesses student placement using the Accuplacer Assessment, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), American College Testing (ACT), high school transcript information, and any previous college transfer credits. Efforts to replace the Accuplacer with other assessment instruments are being discussed.

Retention and Graduation

TRCC targeted retention and improved graduation/completion rates as an institutional priority. As reported in the self-study, and corroborated by college administration and student services staff at Visiting Team convening sessions and one-on-one interviews, retention initiatives have not resulted in notable improved graduation rates as of this writing. Form S1 reports reveal graduation rates have yo-yo-ed since 2008 – increasing 11% one year then dropping 10% the next year.

TRCC anticipates improved retention and graduation rates in the coming years as enrollments continue to be strong, Title III initiatives come to fruition, and the school returns to the one-to-one/customized advising practices designed to meet individual student needs and academic plans.

In response to the 2008 CIHE Interim Report, TRCC added staff for its distance learning programs and strengthened advising and other services for their online programming, specifically in-service professional development in Blackboard, the College's distance learning technology platform. The growing demand for technology supports for all students is evidenced by cultural trends and anecdotal responses at student convening sessions attended by Visiting Team members. Students expressed frustration with the lack of a streamlined log-on process for college email, student information system and Blackboard (each requiring different passwords, and password security initiatives require students to change passwords for each every 90 days).

Student Services

A centralized Student Services Division—housed in a dedicated wing of the College serves students in a plethora of personal and academic supports: counseling and student development, financial aid, placement testing, disabilities services, student recruiting/admissions and registration offices. The department also supports adult learner initiatives, veteran's outreach, community collaborations, childcare and the Campus Scholarship Program. Last year, over \$54,000 in TRCC Foundation-based merit scholarships were distributed to deserving students.

TRCC makes provisions for identifying and responding to the varied learning needs of its student population with a comprehensive course placement and academic support programs. These initiatives include Accuplacer assessments, SAT and ACT data for

new students, and services from the Retention Coordinator and trained faculty advisors to assist student reinstatement and those underprepared students with academic and personal supports.

TRCC's Financial Aid is processed through an organized delivery system. The office is staffed with skilled professionals and aid awards are based on the equitable application of clear and publicized criteria. As with other student services departments, the Financial Aid department experienced extensive workload increases in conjunction with the recent enrollment boom.

One area of marked improvement is the reduction in the College's default rate. In response to the CIHE Interim Report in 2008, TRCC's financial aid default rate reduced from over 10% to 7.5% as of this writing. These results were impacted by increased debt counseling initiatives specifically student-family debt counseling programs, brochures, posters, fliers and information on the College's website.

Strong cross-divisional collaborations support a holistic approach to academic success, retention and completion of high-risk students through Title III programming, including but not limited to: Fortified First-Year Student Programs; streamlined new student admissions/registration/orientation processing; successful faculty to student mentoring and community-building initiatives; and, early and sustained intervention programming in the student's first year (and beyond if necessary).

The Student Services wing of the campus is centralized and easy to access. It features a Student Welcoming Center and houses admissions, financial aid, testing, counseling, and advising services. A vibrant and strong Student Life department provides students with opportunities for participation and leadership development with their active student government and club programming.

TRCC serves over 500 Veteran students in its Veteran's Oasis Center. The Center, staffed by representatives from the Veteran's Administration office and veterans who are TRCC students, provides information and resources to current and returning veterans.

TRCC's tutoring center provides one-on-one and small group tutoring for students to seek this service. Student tutors assist students with developmental needs; and professional tutors support college-level students who seek this academic service. Space needs challenge the center, however, as increased enrollments correspondingly result in increased utilization of the center and its services.

The administration and staff in Student Services are skilled, credentialed and qualified by formal training and work experience. The dean has earned a doctorate degree; members of the senior staff hold doctoral and master's degrees; and all counselors and advisors maintain necessary credentials and participate in regular training and development programs to strengthen their knowledge in current trends.

Student rights, responsibilities, grievance procedures, and all ethical standards as they relate to student services are clearly stated, well publicized on the College website, student handbook and college catalog. The College boasts a safe and secure workplace as an institution of higher education. TRCC contracts a full-time (unarmed) campus security force and supports an active crime prevention program and proactive patrols.

The College's Safety Committee meets regularly, and TRCC's Annual Crime Statistics are maintained and available to current faculty, staff and students, as well as the public; and, these data are reported in the Annual Security Report as federally mandated.

Institutional Effectiveness

With support from the Office of Institutional Research, various national student satisfaction surveys, including the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), and program-based/college-based assessments, anecdotal and data-informed decisions are made with an overall goal to create environments, programs, and services that encourage persistence and student success. There is room for significant improvement in how data is used and data-informed decisions are articulated.

Standard 7: Library and Other Information Resources

Resources and Access

The Donald R. Welter Library is central to the student experience at Three Rivers Community College. The library makes substantial contributions to the academic and cultural life of the Campus, through activities such as student and faculty readings, the Early Childhood Education storytelling program and hosting numerous committee and department meetings. Library and information services are offered 60 hours per week in a 14,000 square foot facility, which provides a variety of group and private study spaces. The facility is bright and welcoming and was constructed in 2009 as part of the new merged campus. During all observed times the library space was busy and vibrant and this snapshot of usage is supported by the latest library annual report (2010-11), which indicates an annual gate count of 135,439. Although, the current facility appears to be adequate to meet student needs, additional enrollment growth may place unmanageable demands on the space.

The library facility is ADA compliant, and staff members strive to provide services and technology that are easily accessible to disabled patrons. The library provides 32 computer workstations and printing for student use. In addition, the library offers laptops, iPads and Kindle Readers for checkout. Due to high demand and limited wireless access on most of the campus, the library computers are in regular use and some students commented that it was hard to find an available computer. The library

also has a computer classroom available for library instruction as well as 7 rooms for group and private study.

The library is open six days a week and is able to provide extensive hours and service despite a limited number of staff members. As enrollment on the ground and in distance education has grown, the staff has seen new challenges and increasing demands placed on them. The library is frequently understaffed and thin which has caused some reduction in service levels and has made it difficult to offer hours of operation that serve the needs of their students. Library staff reported that they have had frequent requests for expanded hours during evenings and weekend, but have been unable to accommodate that need due to reduced staffing levels.

The library is administratively under the department of Information Technology. Formerly, the library reported to the Academic Dean, but in 2009 a change was made to report to Information Technology. The Director of Library Services reports to the Dean of Information Technology and meets frequently to discuss issues and concerns as they arise. The Director of Library Services makes an annual budget presentation and the Dean advocates for that budget at the cabinet level. Library decision-making is also guided by the Library Advisory Committee, which is made up of faculty and staff. Although the library director has autonomy in library budget decisions, she is not involved at a higher level in discussion of budget priorities. The 2011-2012 library acquisitions budget was decreased by 52.3% and no discussions took place with the Director of Library Services as to the potential impact of this decision.

The budget reductions have also impacted staffing levels in the library. The library currently has a full-time director, one full-time (temporary) reference librarian and five other part-time staff, including one part-time reference staff. Each part-time staff member works 17 hours per week. Although small in numbers, the library has a well-qualified, dedicated, and student-centered staff. All staff members are accessible and able to provide assistance with the location and evaluation of appropriate information resources. Based on comments from the student luncheon and discussions with faculty, it appears that library staff members are highly regarded and go above and beyond to offer assistance to students. However, the reduced number of full-time, appropriately credentialed staff has created a challenge to adequately serve students.

Guided by its Mission Statement, the library strives to provide students and faculty with access to collections necessary to support their teaching and research needs. The physical collection contains over 40,000 physical items (books and audiovisual), 22,000 eBooks and approximately 611,000 online periodicals in over 30 research databases. In addition, students have access to databases through the Connecticut Education Network. Although the library had previously made regular additions to the collection, recent budget cuts have made it difficult to maintain a current and relevant collection. This year, database subscriptions and eBook collections have been maintained, but no new purchases are possible either in print or electronic. In addition, many periodical subscriptions have been cancelled and some databases are being reviewed for potential cancellation. The Director of Library Services maximizes the use of limited

funds by participation in consortia purchases. Research databases, books and streaming video collections are available on or off campus. In addition, the library has a presence in the College's Blackboard Learn platform.

Library materials are selected in collaboration with faculty and closely tied to the academic offerings of the College. A well-articulated collection development plan describes the process for selection, gifts and discards. Faculty may request material at any time, and every effort is made to fulfill those requests. In addition, each academic department has a designated liaison to the library and these individuals and the Library Advisory Committee provide recommendations for purchase. In conversations with several faculty members, it was stated that librarians frequently reach out to faculty for purchase suggestions as well as working with department representatives. In the past, funds for library acquisitions were allocated to support the various programs, but this has not been possible due to reduced funding. Although the full impact of these budget reductions have not yet been felt by the academic departments, future funding at this level will restrict the library's ability to provide necessary resources to support academic work.

In addition to their own holdings, students have access via interlibrary loan to the collections of libraries throughout Connecticut and the United States. In 2010-11, the library obtained 792 items for students and faculty. All faculty and staff may borrow materials directly from other libraries in the Connecticut Library Consortium. In addition, Three Rivers Community College shares their catalog with eleven other community colleges.

Reference and research services are offered by one full-time librarian and a director who each hold a Master's in Library Science. There is also one part-time (17 hours per week), reference and instruction librarian. Reference assistance is offered on a walk-in basis or by appointment. To reach the largest number of students, librarians answer questions in person, by phone, email and instant messaging. In addition, librarians field many questions regarding computer usage, audiovisual equipment and a variety of related services.

Numerous services are offered to students who are studying online, or off campus. These include access to electronic databases, virtual and telephone reference services, course subject guides and online tutorials. In addition, all electronic resources are available remotely. Although only 40 course sections are offered online, increased online learning will place increasing demands on the library. The library will need to effectively market library services to these populations and provide library instruction to distance learners. These will require additional staffing.

Working in close collaboration with faculty, librarians design library instruction sessions to meet the specific needs of classes and assignments. Information Literacy is one of the eight learning outcomes for students. These outcomes are currently under revision to accommodate the merger with the other Connecticut State Colleges, but it is anticipated that information literacy will continue to be a piece of that. To address that

goal, the library offers a robust library instruction program. The majority of instruction takes place in introductory English courses and during the First Year Experience course. Although, the current program does not allow librarians to build on skills throughout the student's academic career, librarians continually look for these opportunities. In addition, the library offers course and program specific instruction to nursing and other programs.

Information and Technological Literacy

Assessment of student's information literacy skills and the effectiveness of library instruction are accomplished in a few ways. First, the student learning outcomes are evaluated on a three-year cycle. The Information Literacy outcome was last assessed in the spring of 2012. Sample student papers and projects are evaluated based on a rubric developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries. The results from the assessment indicate more work needs to be done. In the four areas of the rubric, the percentage of students scoring in the beginning level was from 40-60%. Results from the second measure were more encouraging. After receiving library instruction, students are given a five question post-test. Results from spring 2012, show 75% of students scoring 4 or 5 correct answers. In addition to assessment around information literacy, the library issues a campus-wide annual student satisfaction survey. In addition, the library regularly reviews usage data, to determine the effectiveness of resources and services. This includes gate count, circulation and database usage.

Institutional Effectiveness

The library is staffed by a dedicated, well trained and student centered staff. They strive to provide services and resources that meet student and faculty needs. The staff is responsive to student and faculty feedback and actively seeks that feedback to continually improve services. To achieve the goal of development of student information literacy skills, the library offers a robust information literacy program and evaluates student attainment of these skills in a number of ways. The reference and instruction staff are exploring additional ways to conduct assessment and have initiated conversations with faculty about how to incorporate this into the curriculum. Recent budget restrictions have caused reductions in staffing and 52.3% reduction in the acquisitions budget. These budget limitations are creating barriers to achieving the library and college mission and strategic plan.

Standard 8: Physical and Technological Resources

Three Rivers Community College's physical facility appears to be a well maintained, aesthetically attractive and educationally functional building. Since the last comprehensive evaluation in 2003, the College secured the necessary fiscal support from the state of Connecticut to construct the new facility that physically united the two campuses. The 296,000 assignable square feet are distributed between classroom and

laboratory settings, faculty offices, administrative and student services office and areas for students to study, socialize and interact in formal or informal ways.

The advantage of a new facility is evident in the minimal demands for repairs or renovations that are currently underway. The Master Plan demonstrates thoughtful planning that generated input from the College community members resulting in what appears to be highly functional space. A gap between the planning period and construction and completion of the new project lead to a lost opportunity for prioritizing sustainable or green technologies in the design of the building. However, a new Master Plan is underway in anticipation of the final construction of a yet unfinished and unfunded 500+ seat theater and will take into consideration green construction elements, thus completing the entire new campus construction project.

While the new campus has afforded the students and faculty a wonderful teaching and learning environment, the College's capacity has nearly been met given recent increases in student enrollment. 1,204 parking spaces afford sufficient parking for students and staff but the College addressed parking concerns immediately upon taking occupancy of the building by modifying the course schedule to maximize parking opportunities. This creative approach will need to continue in the area of scheduling if enrollment numbers exceed 5,100 students (headcount) which is considered capacity for the campus. The College might also consider off campus facility rentals to accommodate additional enrollments. These enrollment projections should be considered for the effect on the physical plant and fiscal demands to ensure the success of the College's operations and be included in a comprehensive strategic plan addressing these and other institutional priorities.

Classroom and laboratory spaces are well organized with student and instructional needs prioritized. The College appears to have partnered well with local business and industry partners securing high tech equipment for instructional purposes. The nursing simulator laboratories underwritten by the William W. Backus Hospital and the nuclear simulator supported by the Dominion Nuclear Connecticut demonstrate creative funding solutions as well as strong ties to the local business community.

New construction afforded the College the opportunity to satisfy the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), ensuring access to all areas of the facility. Safety and security of the facility is achieved through a combined security system of both keyless and traditional key entry. Fiscal constraints drove decisions to establish the combined system with keyless entry being prioritized in high level security areas including server rooms and key administrative areas. Good monitoring of the keyless areas is captured through both key swipe information and in some areas, camera monitoring devices of activity in these secure areas.

A deferred maintenance list is maintained by the College recognizing the need to maintain its facility on an ongoing basis. Currently, the deferred maintenance list for Three Rivers Community College exceeds 3 million dollars. Like other funding from the state, deferred maintenance has not been funded for the past three fiscal years.

Deferred maintenance costs are not allowable with operational or other state funding, thus leaving the College with little means to address current or future demands. The information technology area can be separated into four areas of duty and responsibility, library services, educational computing, customer support and network services. Each distinct area is addressed by the institution supporting the underlying demand for technology on campus. The library's reassignment to the information and technology dean seems to have supported its demand for technology, multimedia and database resources in a way that is compatible with the traditional academic functions. The Director of the Library creates and recommends a separate budget for the library distinct from the remaining information technology budget, thus preserving the distinct purposes within the institution.

The educational computing function at the College is a small but effective operation. Under the information and technology division, the department staff works collaboratively with academic counterparts to strengthen the use of technology in the academic environment. In addition to their academic component, the Director of Educational Technology also serves as the College's webmaster. In this capacity, he coordinates the training and content management of the website with college personnel authorized as content managers.

Academic computing appears diverse and inclusive of both faculty and students. The BlackBoard learning platform seems to be used significantly by both full-time and adjunct faculty members. Students' response to online learning strategies was mixed with the most favorable opinion driving toward a blended learning of traditional and online instruction. While the College's efforts to grow and instruct faculty on the use of the BlackBoard system appear to have been well thought out as evidenced by the faculty mentor program and the Instructional and Information Technology Training (IITT) Program and iTeach Essentials curriculum, student confusion/dissatisfaction with this mode of instruction might indicate a need for further training prior to student enrollment in the elements of successful online learning.

The educational technology operation supports the ongoing development and expansion of online learning for the College. All technology training is generated from this area whether developed locally or supported by the central office. Training on hardware and software applications inside and outside of the classroom support end users competent use of these technologies. Student training is also supported on the College's learning platform, but to a lesser extent now, due to a reduction in staffing in this area. Assessment of this training is somewhat sporadic, but the use of focus groups and a survey of the staffs' training and technology needs have been utilized in the past to assess effectiveness. A more systematic approach to the evaluation of training and services would provide the staff with feedback that might be instrumental to their future planning. The College's online learning platform (BlackBoard), secure portal system (Luminus), information management system (Banner), student email system, and emergency messaging system are managed centrally through ConnSCU. The IT office offers input and feedback to the CIO at the central office during decision-making processes surrounding these services to offer a campus perspective. Locally, the

educational technology operation makes every effort to support students and staff as they utilize these services in their interactions with the College. The Educational Technology Committee appears to be an effective campus team that address campus-wide matters and generate solutions for campus implementation.

Students and employees receive support for their computing needs through both local and centralized system operated help desk services. Currently, a 24/7 helpdesk service is provided by the ConnSCU through an outsourced contractor. Local needs are satisfied by the information and technology staff ranging from deployment of hardware to the installation of software products and general end user and other operational issues. Reductions in staffing and proposed changes in ConnSCU supported information and technology systems may alter the overall satisfaction that was expressed on campus.

The College's telecommunication system is also slated for upgrade and this will likely be a system supported initiative. Locally, the campus administers an acceptable use policy for all end users and addresses many data security issues. This policy is similarly under review by ConnSCU for a system-wide policy development initiative.

Data security and disaster recovery appear to be areas where the local and statewide entities pair effectively to satisfy state and federal privacy laws. While the College serves as a disaster recovery site and has effectively prepared itself to deal with any physical breaches of its data systems, the central office administers antivirus controls and assists the College with forensic analysis of any hard drive to determine the root cause of a computer infection. Although the process for securing this assistance was described as "inefficient", the need for the assistance seems consistent and the central office is responsive in offering the service.

Strategic planning is overdue in the area of information and technology. The most recent document offered on system policies and procedures was proffered in 2006. Given the dynamic changes to technology, much of the content is out of date. While the College clearly demonstrated its current capacity to support and deploy information technology services, there is no road map for the future. There also appears to be no connection to other related department's planning needs. Much was discussed of the central office's planning for system wide changes, but local consideration should be given to the anticipated demands. One example was the recent security standard for mobile devices issued in May 2012. This relatively informal communication should be formalized and incorporated into the College's mainstream business practices to measure its effectiveness and provide the necessary notice to employees and to allow appropriate enforcement. A risk assessment model should also be initiated to identify potential risks to the institution based on existing or emerging technologies.

Institutional Effectiveness

Three Rivers Community College is presently positioned well in both their physical and technological resources due to the recent construction and completion of the consolidated campus facility. Little strategic planning appears to be present to address future needs and demands for either the technological or physical resources. The

College will need to overcome the challenge of a state centralized approach to information technology delivery to effectively serve their campus constituencies and remain current with emerging enterprises.

Standard 9: Financial Resources

Three Rivers Community College is a public community college whose financial viability relies on three sources of funding to support its operations: state support (general fund); tuition revenues (operating fund); and federal grants and contracts. The past several years have been notable due to the significant and largely unanticipated declines in state appropriations, forcing the College to reevaluate its operations and funding structures that have traditionally composed their budget management processes. The level of insecurity related to the current fiscal situation was palpable amongst most groups on campus except for students.

While the College's finances are in order and accounted for in accordance with general accounting standards as evidenced by state mandated audits and well documented financial statements, the financial stability of the organization is less clear given the current state of instability at the state's central administration office (ConnSCU). ConnSCU is responsible for the development of most policies and procedures that impact the finances of the College at the local level. The change in the central organization has put into question past practices such as the process of the funding of the biennial budget, distribution or receipt of resources from sector colleges, and funding of personnel through the general fund. Finance and administration committees have been formed by the Board of Regents and are working to establish new budget and finance procedures. The campus remains wary as to the effect of these changes on their institution. Basic funds that the College has relied upon such as deferred maintenance allocations and the funding and support of reserve accounts have either been abandoned (no deferred maintenance funding from the state for the past three years) or are threatened with the College having had to access their reserve accounts to fund operational costs and the threat of the loss of reserves to state control looming large.

The fact that students did not express concern of diminished services or educational programs indicates that the College is still currently achieving its academic mission and purpose in spite of significant fiscal losses. Faculty did not express concern over teaching conditions or support, further reinforcing the continued support of the teaching and learning mission. Due to the reductions of the general fund and the complex collective bargaining requirements, the College's decision to balance a challenging budget through the elimination or vacancy of certain positions, or not addressing new personnel needs to address student enrollment demands was a consistent concern across the campus. The base of financial support is limited as described above and will need to be expanded in order for the institution to continue to grow or address current needs.

The expansion of the funding base presents opportunities to the College that can improve their current state. The Three Rivers Community College Foundation and the College's Advancement Office expressed enthusiasm about the ability to work with departments within the College to determine needs and then seek funding sources to support these operational initiatives. The Advancement Office is seeking to expand its current donor base including alumni giving and decrease its sole reliance on two major fundraising events for the support of their operational and scholarship costs. For example, the College could seek grant resources that are consistent with their mission and purpose to support their continued growth and development. Expansion of non-credit and workforce development activities might be examined for potential growth and revenue generation.

Three Rivers Community College appears to be an active participant and contributor to the development of the institutional biennial budget preparation process as defined by the Board of Regents. The approval authority rests with the Board as do many of the policies and procedures associated with expenditure approvals related to personnel costs, capital expenditures and set aside mandates. On a local level, there appears to be little input or transparency on the allocation of budgets resulting in concern on the part of some departmental managers who indicated no known budget for their area of responsibility.

The allocation of funding is largely expended on personnel costs associated with the College's educational operations. There appear to be no costs inconsistent with the educational mission of the College.

The administration of financial aid for the student body has expanded greatly over the past several years. The College utilizes many of the automated functions in the Banner financial aid module to award and disburse financial aid funds in accordance with state and federal policies and guidelines. The College has consistently budgeted a state mandated set aside amounting to \$1.5 million for fiscal year 2012 for distribution in student aid. The office administered \$6 million dollars in Pell grant funds, \$900,000 in CT state grant aid and \$54,000 in private or merit scholarships. Over \$1.7 million dollars worth of student loans were processed making Three Rivers Community College one of the top CT community college loan awarders for the past several years. In an effort to reduce student indebtedness and a higher than desirable student default rate, the financial aid office has undertaken methods to discourage student borrowing beyond direct college costs. These efforts have been rewarded with a lowered student loan default rate of 7.5% for the current year.

The financial aid office is audited as prescribed by the state of Connecticut. Given the large increases in student enrollment and access to financial aid, the institution identified in its self-study, delays in processing student aid due to personnel shortages and increased workloads. The College has just added a new professional staff member to the financial aid staff, but currently does not support a professional with a Director of Financial Aid job title. This appeared to be due to collective bargaining effects on

personnel, but an individual was identified as having the duties of the director without the title. The structure, staffing and effectiveness of this operation should be assessed to determine if the necessary elements are in existence to efficiently manage this important financial function.

The finance and administration department is led by a Chief Financial Officer who serves on the President's cabinet. Supported by budgetary and fiscal personnel, the department manages all financial operations for the College and maintains consistent relations with the ConnSCU central office. Along with the external audit, the administrative controls exercised by ConnSCU are designed to provide appropriate checks and balances on financial transactions.

An area of concern for the College lies in the unpredictability of state funding on an annual basis (or biennial budget cycle). Mid-year reversions by the state turn college budget plans upside down and many of the College's greatest risks lie with their own state system whose unpredictability often threatens the good fiscal practices maintained by the College. One example of this is the College's effort to support a contingency fund in its annual budget to assist in the event of an unplanned emergency. Such a situation has occurred on the campus and the College was forced to access their reserve account (totaling \$2.5 million) to cover the unexpected costs. Even these reserves, a fundamental good practice in the fiscal management of an organization are potentially at risk as the ConnSCU group evaluates its Colleges' collective resources and attempts to make up for state wide budget shortfalls.

The perilous fiscal times that the state of Connecticut and Three Rivers Community College finds itself in can be improved by enhancements to their current planning and budgeting processes. As previously stated, institutional priorities identified through the College's planning processes should drive the establishment of fiscal priorities. Establishing a more participatory budget process along with the factual information on budget restrictions will aid in a positive local understanding of the situation and the difficult choices presented to the College in these austere times. Similarly, the establishment of enrollment targets designed to support the necessary tuition revenues should be constructed in consultation with key enrollment managers to insure the necessary support in achieving the identified goals. The current top down, restricted approach to planning appears to have alienated college community members and may be part of an overall morale concern.

Institutional Effectiveness

The College has experienced significant down turns in their state funding resources at the same time that they have witnessed significant growth in their enrolled student population. They have sought ways to offset these state funding losses with improved tuition revenues. While the College's fiscal future may currently appear somewhat unpredictable, they currently carry no significant debt liabilities and have the potential to explore untapped private resources that may supplement previously state supported activities.

Standard 10: Public Disclosure

Three Rivers Community College makes information about itself publicly available via their website, the student portal and a variety of print publications. Print publications are reviewed annually and the website is reviewed on an ongoing basis. The Director of Educational Technology has overall responsibility for the website, but each department controls their own content. The Web Authors Committee meets at least twice annually to conduct a more extensive review and the Director of Educational Technology reviews pages for accuracy and clerical errors during the summer. The Website was recently restructured, which has enhanced the College's ability to provide accurate and up to date information.

Since completion of the self-study, the College has created a central page for required information for disclosure by the Higher Education Act and Higher Education Opportunity Act. This includes a variety of information including, articulation agreements, accreditation information, a net price calculator and other policy information. These resources are available elsewhere on the website, but this provides a central point of access. The College is working on improved navigation of the website and using terminology that is meaningful to students.

The College publishes online quick facts and a fact book that provide details and characteristics of the student body. In addition, information relative to student services and resources can all be found online. Information regarding tuition, fees and other associated costs can be found on the Admissions Department website. The college catalog has been available exclusively online since the 2010-11 version. The catalog provides access to information on admission and attendance and provides a portrait of campus life. Archival print catalogs are available in the Library and Registrar's Office and the College is working to provide these online. All policies, procedures and student requirements are published online and in the Student Handbook.

Guiding documents such as the College Mission Statement and Strategic Plan are available on the College website. The College's mission statement is widely publicized and published in a variety of locations.

Courses not offered during a particular semester are not indicated online, but departments routinely review their list of courses and remove those not taught for two consecutive years. Program educational outcomes and goals are published on department pages, but it is difficult to locate the general education learning outcomes. These outcomes create expectations for students, but they are not widely available.

The College does provide some information on student success, including graduation and retention rates as well as passage rates for professional licensure. Some programs, like nursing also gather data on student employment and placement, however in general the College does not provide this data due to a low response rates on graduate

surveys. Although the College does not make claims in this area, this data could be valuable to prospective students and for program evaluation.

Information about faculty, staff, and college and system leadership are also available on the website and in the college catalog. In addition, contact information for all personnel may be found in an online directory. Any information not found on the website can be requested from the appropriate office. Requests for information are accepted via email and telephone.

Institutional Effectiveness

Three Rivers Community College provides access to needed information for the public and prospective and current students. Although a few gaps exist, the College is working to address those areas. Since the printing of the self-study, several of the projections have already been achieved. For example, the College has added easy access to current financial statements.

Standard 11: Integrity

TRCC subscribes to high ethical standards in the management of its affairs and in all of its dealings with students, prospective students, faculty, staff, the Connecticut Board of Regents, community stakeholders and the general public. The institution's core values incorporate the fundamentals of integrity, specifically: responsibility to self, colleagues and the community; trust and confidence in sound academic programs; and, a spirit of collegiality is embraced across the academy.

The institution's commitment to access and diversity, coupled with fairness and the continued pursuit of clarity, are hallmarks to this decade's old institution. Work room materials, such as the updated Student Conduct and Discipline policies establish expectations for behaviors and proscribe values-based corrections procedures that promote personal development, accountability and fairness.

At a meeting of student government and student activities club leaders, students freely expressed a sense of personal and academic support from faculty and staff: "The First-Year Experience [course] really helped me as a new student;" and, "The clubs are great – there's one for everyone—for everyone's interest;" and, "I am a pre-nursing student. I graduate with my general studies degree this year and I have used the degree audit and it is accurate...I have had great support with tutors and have tutored other students as well."

In convening sessions with faculty, adjunct faculty and college staff, the Visiting Team heard similar sentiments about shared responsibility and shared support. Promotion and tenure practices reveal ethical protocols and engage a peer-review process with the TRCC President as the final arbiter. Academic departments participate in a continuous review of academic programs and faculty evaluations strengthening academic integrity

and relevance of institution's program offerings.

Institutional research data is abundant; however faculty, staff and administrators were not able to articulate how data support policy and procedural initiatives and/or changes.

TRCC's policies and protocols reflect commitments to civility and fairness to faculty, staff and students. Examples of these instances emerge in official declarations, as found in their six collective bargaining agreements, grievance procedures and integrity guidelines. In spite of a tremendous enrollment surge—nearly 50%—realized over the last five years, student grievances have remained very low; however, faculty and staff grievances, particularly about increased workloads, have increased correspondingly.

Students and faculty corroborate that TRCC is committed to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. Academic freedom is articulated in both faculty bargaining agreements; and, students report the spirit of freedom of expression and open dialogue in classrooms, at student government and activities proceedings, and student-sponsored media outlets such as club-specific Facebook sites.

TRCC's governance structure includes the President's Cabinet and college Governing Council, and several other standing committees with both administration and faculty membership that are involved in the conception, development, approval, and monitoring of academic and student service programs. Students hold two seats on the Governing Council, however at this writing only one student serves at this time.

The College endeavors to communicate openly about new policies and procedures however, a persistent perception voiced at convening sessions with faculty, standard team chairs, and an open forum session of the college community relay that information is not shared in a timely and transparent manner. Minutes of meetings are distributed via email to the college community and available for viewing in a shared drive. To supplement access to college information, the institution may want to use Blackboard as a repository of minutes and other college community information so that it can be viewed at any time by faculty and staff, and students where appropriate.

Affirmative Action, EEOC, and ADA compliance postings are prominent on employee bulletin boards, the College website and job postings. Family Education Rights and Privacy (FERPA) policies are posted in student service areas; and, diversity initiatives corroborated by the Disabilities Coordinator and institutional Affirmative Action Officer. Academic integrity policies, including academic dishonesty and plagiarism policies are prominent on course syllabi and the TRCC Student Handbook and website.

TRCC faculty and staff demonstrate honesty and integrity in their relationship with CIHE. Members of the TRCC Self-Study team attend training sessions, serve on visiting teams, and participate in NEASC-sponsored conferences and workshops to ensure awareness and compliance of policies and procedures.

Institutional Effectiveness

The spirit of the College is one of collegial support and respect. And, although institutional research data is regularly collected it is not evident that standards for applying and articulating data-informed decision-making are widely implemented. It is believed that with a more comprehensive review and application of institutional findings TRCC initiatives can be better supported.

Likewise, communications practices, as reported in the Self-Study and confirmed by the Visiting Team members, are not consistent. This organizational challenge has the potential to create a culture that lacks inclusiveness and transparency. College administration acknowledges these issues, particularly as the state's higher education governance system is in flux, and the state legislature seeks to impact efficiencies within the public systems impacting organizational structure, fiscal realities and access initiatives.

Strengths and Concerns

Standard 1 – Mission and Purpose

Strengths:

- The TRCC mission provides access to affordable quality education that has direct impact on the lives of its students as well as the economic and social development of the community that it serves.
- The TRCC community is aware of and is passionate about the mission of the college.
- The TRCC mission is measurable and the college engages in that process.
- The TRCC mission motivates faculty and staff to action.

Concerns:

- The recent changes in public higher education at the statewide level, reorganization and SB40/PA12-40 as examples, has created a great deal of uncertainty with regard to the compatibility of the TRCC mission with the Regents mission.
- The current fiscal environment of the state has added to the level of uncertainty about the sustainability of the TRCC mission.

Standard 2 – Planning

Strengths

- TRCC has systematically implemented the System Strategic Priorities and College Goals and assessed institutional effectiveness to operationalize them.
- The General Education Committee has developed a sustainable model for outcome assessment that has articulated outcomes, developed rubrics, and collected artifacts. This initiative is poised to continue the process, identify benchmarks and assess learning.
- System level priorities are effectively communicated across the college community.

Concerns

- TRCC does not demonstrate the use of internal systems to connect related activities, e.g. Gen Ed. Committee, Institutional Assessment Committee, to the College Goals at the lowest operational levels and to articulate and assess action outcomes.
- IR has a robust collection of data. It does not appear that data is used college wide to inform strategic initiatives, use of resources, identification of priorities, or to inform change.
- College communication often relies on passive methods, e.g. group email that may or may not be read, and the decision making process is not transparent.

Standard 3 – Organization and Governance

Strengths

- The College community is comprised of committed faculty, students, staff and administrators who are appropriately organized and well represented at all levels of the Internal and System-wide Governance Structure.
- The College Community members are accustomed to working collaboratively in the Community College System with their colleagues across all 12 colleges.
- The new Strategic Plan initiatives from the Board of Regents for the System has motivated the College to actively pursue its own Strategic Plan.

Concerns

- The new BOR structural, organizational, and governance changes has created a climate of uncertainty and lack of trust.
- The College does not demonstrate an institutional culture of on-going reflection and assessment.
- The college community seeks increased transparency in the decision making process.

Standard 4 – Academic Programs

Strengths:

- There is a committed and competent faculty.
- Many programs have clear goals, learning outcomes and embedded assessment systems, aided by a strong IR unit, especially those subject to external accreditation.
- There is a strong educational technology design and resource team.
- There is a strong developmental education program for Math & English.
- There are many alternative pathways for students to earn college credit including CLEP, APL, Military, etc.

Concerns:

- Communication within the academic division is a concern.
- The impending changes in developmental education and transfer rules is increasing uncertainty and negatively affecting morale.
- Assessment is not uniformly developed.

Standard 5 – Faculty

Strengths:

- TRCC enjoys the benefits of a quality faculty body.
- Faculty care deeply about students and persevere on their behalf

- The TRCC campus provides faculty and staff with the appropriate tools, labs and physical environments for quality teaching and learning.

Concerns:

- The academic program review process lacks consistency in compensation, evaluation, submission process and use of final outcomes.
- Lack of college wide effective communication negatively impact faculty.

Standard 6 – Students

Strengths:

- TRCC had a robust enrollment growth in recent years, seemingly leveling off this academic year, representing a culturally diverse demographic present in the service region.
- In response to the CIHE Interim Report in 2008, the college's financial aid default rate reduced from over 10 percent to 7.5%.
- Strong cross-divisional collaborations to support a holistic approach to academic success, retention and completion of high-risk students through Title III programming.
- A centralized student services wing and Welcoming Center supports admissions, financial aid, testing, counseling, and advising
- A vibrant and strong Student Life program engages the student body.

Concern:

- As engaged as faculty and staff are in the creation, implementation and maintenance of new and existing programs that support student success, systemic change efforts lack focus.
- Student tutoring space and ESL programming are inadequate to meet student demand.
- Deliberate and data-informed decision making processes are not yet part of the TRCC culture.

Standard 7 – Library

Strengths

- The TRCC community is well served by dedicated, resilient and highly trained staff committed to student success.
- The library is a bright and welcoming facility that offers an environment conducive to learning, reflection and study.
- The library offers a rich collection of resources that has been developed through close collaboration with faculty.

Concerns

- College budget reductions have negatively impacted library staffing and the acquisitions budget creating obstacles to achieving the college and library mission. There is no clear indication of college priorities and the college appears to lack an inclusive process for making budget decisions.
- While notable efforts have been made around assessment of student information literacy skill, additional progress is needed. These efforts are hindered by limited staffing.

Standard 8 – Physical and Technological Resources

Strengths

- The campus facilities should be a source of pride for staff, faculty and students. The facility is well maintained and aesthetically pleasing. The teaching and learning environment is up-to-date and conducive to the educational mission of the college.
- Technology is a priority for the institution both in terms of infrastructure and instructional design. The College seems to effectively manage centrally administered programs as well as locally controlled services with limited resources.

Concerns

- A growing deferred maintenance list needs to be addressed if the current state of the facility is to be maintained. The College will need to find resources or solutions to satisfy deferred maintenance items in the near future if state support remains unfunded.

Standard 9 – Financial Resources

Strengths:

- In spite of recent cutbacks the College has worked with its recently impaired financial resources to continue to provide services to students at a level that has caused no disruption to the educational quality or experience.
- A renewed energy was evident in the area of institutional advancement. There is great potential in this area to increase revenues available to support the College's educational mission.

Concerns:

- State budget cutbacks are forecasted to continue for the next several years. The impact on the campus is significant, having ended FY'12 in the red and

with a FY'13 & FY'14 projection of continued reduced funding. Without alternate funding resources and authority it will be difficult to sustain operations at the current level.

- Personnel decisions in 2015 may aid in achieving a balance budget, but will likely negatively impact the provision of services to students and the institution as a whole. Without alternate funding or delivery methods it will be difficult to maintain the current quality of services.
- The budget process and strategic planning process lack connectivity. There was no evidence that institutional priorities are being identified, prioritized and then funded to the extent allowed by the college's existing resources.

Standard 10 – Public Disclosure

Strength

- TRCC has demonstrated a commitment to public disclosure and compliance with relevant state and federal right to know laws.

Concern

- Although claims about student employment and placement are not made, the college does not provide this data which could aid students and families.

Standard 11 – Integrity

Strengths

- TRCC is committed to access and diversity, coupled with fairness and a continued pursuit of clarity and transparency.
- At a meeting of student government and student activities club leaders, students freely expressed a sense of personal and academic support from faculty and staff: "The First-Year Experience [course] really helped me as a new student;" and, "The clubs are great – there's one for everyone—for everyone's interest;" and, "I am a pre-nursing student. I graduate with my general studies degree this year and I have used the degree audit and it is accurate...I have had great support with tutors and have tutored other students as well."

Concerns

- Although administration works hard to be communicative and transparent, especially in light of the governance transitions at the System office and state legislature, the perception among faculty and staff is that information is not timely or consistent.

Institutional Effectiveness

There is a clear body of evidence that the mission drives the planning, budgeting and day to day activities of TRCC. While TRCC systematically assesses the achievement of the System Strategic Priorities and College Goals, it does not appear to have systems in place to evaluate the achievement of its mission and purposes or to determine the effectiveness of its planning and evaluation activities on an ongoing basis across divisions and departments.

TRCC has several tools for assessing its effectiveness. The College continues to participate in CCSSE in order to determine how programs and services are meeting the needs of students. Through the Office of Institutional Research, the College has devised a model, called The Map that helps all units of the College to rate their performance against the College 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. There is room for improvement in how data is used and data-informed decisions are articulated.

Three Rivers Community College is presently positioned well in both their physical and technological resources. While the College's fiscal future may currently appear somewhat unpredictable, they currently carry no significant debt liabilities and have the potential to explore untapped private resources that may supplement previously state supported activities.

The spirit of the College is one of collegial support and respect. And, although institutional research data is regularly collected it is not evident that standards for applying and articulating data-informed decision-making are widely implemented. It is believed that with a more comprehensive review and application of institutional findings TRCC initiatives can be better supported.