

**Reaffirmation of Accreditation Recommendation  
for  
Lincoln Land Community College  
Springfield, Illinois**

**of the 2013-2014  
Academic Quality Improvement Program  
Review Panel on Reaffirmation**

**The Higher Learning Commission  
A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools**

**February 24, 2014**

**AQIP Review Panel on Reaffirmation (lead reviewers starred)**

Martha Casazza, Founding Partner, TRPP Associates, Chicago, IL

Mark Kretovics, Associate Professor of Higher Education Administration and Student Personnel,  
Kent State University, Kent, OH

\*Vincent Linder, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Cleary University, MI

\*Deborah Loper, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness, Colorado Mountain College,  
Glenwood Springs, CO

Laurie Pemberton, Director, Institutional Research & Planning, Allan Hancock College, Santa  
Maria, CA

Wendolyn Tetlow, Ret. Vice President of Instruction and Student Learning, Bay de Noc College,  
Escanaba, MI

Linda Wellborn, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Evangel University, Springfield, MO

**I. Context and Nature of Review** .....3

    A. Review Purpose, Process, and Materials

    B. Organizational Context

    C. Organizational Scope and Structure (including extended physical or distance education operations)

    D. Notification of Quality Checkup Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment

    E. Compliance with Federal Requirements

    F. Evidence of the Organization’s Responsiveness to Previous Commission Concerns regarding fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation

**II. Fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation** .....5

**Criterion One: *Mission.*** The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.

**Criterion Two: *Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct.*** The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

**Criterion Three: *Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support.*** The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

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

**Criterion Five: *Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness.*** The institution’s resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

**Summary of panel recommendations regarding fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation** .....22

**III. Participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP)**.....23

    A. Comments and counsel on AQIP action projects

    B. Comments and counsel on the AQIP categories

    C. Comments and counsel on the AQIP principles of high performance organizations and the institution’s quality program or infrastructure

**Summary of panel counsel about the organization’s commitment to continuous quality improvement and its participation in AQIP** .....25

## I. Context And Nature Of Review

### A. Review Purpose, Process, and Materials

AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation reviews are scheduled seven years in advance, when an institution first joins the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) or when an institution already participating in AQIP is reaffirmed via the AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation process.

In conducting these reviews, the AQIP Reaffirmation of review panel examines the following materials for each institution:

- Current Commission History file of institutional actions
- Current Commission Statement of Affiliation Status
- Current official Commission Organizational Profile
- AQIP Review Panel Report(s) on Institutional Status Change Requests
- Focused visit report(s) and action letter(s)
- Institutional websites
- Key correspondence between the institution and the Commission
- Last Comprehensive PEAQ Evaluation team report, institutional response, and Commission action letter
- Summary of Action Projects attempted
- Summary Update of institutional activity and dynamics since the last Quality Checkup, provided by the institution on September 1 of the review year
- Systems Appraisal Feedback Report
- Systems Portfolio, including update provided by the institution on September 1 of the review year
- Quality Checkup report
- Any evidence supporting compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation
- Any other major reports or documents that are part of the institution's permanent Commission files

Two lead panelists from the AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation draft a recommendation that is reviewed and approved by the entire panel before it is forwarded to the Institutional Actions Council.

### B. Organizational Context

Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC) was first accredited by the Commission on March 28, 1973, (having been admitted to Candidacy for Accreditation on March 31, 1971). The institution was admitted to AQIP on August, 28 2009. It participated in a Strategy Forum in 2010.

Since admission to AQIP the institution has officially declared and attempted seven individual Action Projects, and has provided AQIP with Annual Updates of ongoing projects and received Annual Update Feedback Reports on these.

The institution provided its Systems Portfolio for review on June 1, 2013 and received a Systems Appraisal Feedback Report on September 24, 2013.

AQIP conducted a Quality Checkup visit to the institution on November 6-8, 2013 and provided a report of the findings of the visiting team on December 19, 2013.

### **C. Organizational Scope and Structure (including extended physical or distance education operations)**

LLCC offers instruction on its main campus in Springfield as well as the following locations in Illinois: Beardstown, Jacksonville, Hillsboro, Litchfield, Taylorville, the Capital City Training Center, and the Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport. Per the Organizational Profile dated May 7, 2013, LLCC offers 43 associate degrees and 77 certificate programs. The College has a full-time enrollment of 3043 students and 4146 part-time students. The dual education enrollment as of May 2013 was 1901 students.

The College is approved by the Commission to offer 100% of its degree programs through distance learning.

### **D. Notification of Quality Checkup Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment**

A Quality Checkup site visit to the institution was conducted on November 6-8, 2013. In compliance with Commission requirements, the institution notified its constituencies and the public of this visit, and solicited third-party comment to be sent directly to the Commission. The Commission shared all comments received with the institution and the team, and the team discussed both the comments with the institution and reviewed evidence of the institution's compliance with the Commission's notification and third-party comment requirements.

### **E. Compliance with Federal Requirements**

The Quality Checkup team that conducted a site visit to the institution on November 6-8, 2013 examined evidence provided by the institution of its compliance with the Commission's federal compliance program. The Quality Checkup site visit team concluded that the College presented evidence that it meets the goal of the Federal Compliance requirements.

### **F. Evidence of the Organization's Responsiveness to Previous Commission Concerns Regarding Fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation**

Lincoln Land Community College did not have any accreditation issues identified in its last Systems Appraisal or Quality Checkup.

## II. Fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation

**CRITERION ONE: MISSION.** The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

**Core Component 1A:** The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

**Subcomponent 1.** The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

### Evidence:

- The inaugural mission statement guided College operations until February of 2000; the President appointed a Task Force on Institutional Mission in the spring of 2001. The task force was charged with studying the recently-adopted mission statement via an inclusive review process, which included examining feedback from nine regional Board of Trustee forums. The mission statement emerging from that process was reaffirmed during a 2006 review.
- LLCC offers degree and certificate programs organized under five academic divisions: Arts and Humanities, Business and Technologies, Health Professions, Mathematics and Sciences, and Social Sciences. Enrolled students are supported through services such as advising and counseling, peer tutoring, special needs support, study skills specialists, financial aid advising, career development, and a comprehensive library. These programs and services are consistent with the LLCC mission: "To provide district residents with quality educational programs and services that are accessible, affordable, and responsive to individual and community needs."
- The College's mission, vision, core values, and goals are revisited on a five-year cycle as part of the strategic plan and budget review processes ensuring alignment with the institution's priorities.

**Core Component 1B:** The mission is articulated publicly.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.

**Subcomponent 2.** The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.

**Subcomponent 3.** The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The College's mission statement is communicated to internal and external stakeholders via the LLCC website, Catalog, Annual Report, and bookmarks distributed to all employees and available in the Public Relations and Marketing office and Information Desk. The mission statement will be included in upcoming editions of the Student Planner and Forward magazine/class schedule as well as printed on the back of business cards provided to full-time faculty and staff.
- The College's mission documents focus operations on student learning/instruction, community needs, and local economic development. These emphases are explicitly articulated in Board Policy. The documents also articulate in detail LLCC's purposes and the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission.
- LLCC mission documents identify the College's constituents as district residents, businesses, community organizations, social service agencies, governments, and K-12 school districts.

**Core Component 1C:** The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Efforts to strengthen cultural competency in a diverse and global society among faculty, staff and students at LLCC are monitored through key performance indicators aligned with the strategic plan goal which states: "The College (a) strives to advance the knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, (b) increase awareness of one's own cultural worldview, (c) foster an understanding of cultural differences, and (d) enhance cross-cultural skills."

- Consistent with LLCC educational processes and programming giving attention to human diversity, programs exist for student groups with differing needs such as students with disabilities, student athletes, non-graduates from high school, GED completers, non-native English speakers, senior citizens, and other underserved populations.

**Core Component 1D:** The institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

**Subcomponent 1.** Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution’s educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- By statute and mission, LLCC is a public institution operating for the public good. Fulfillment of the public obligation is apparent in board policies that outline how a district resident may request a matter be placed upon the agenda for Board consideration. Review of Board of Trustees’ meeting agendas and minutes further document attention to constituents and the public.
- The College’s strategic goals keep the mission focus on educational responsibility at the forefront of decisions related to new services, programming, and/or student groups. For example, Goal One addresses “Student Access and Success,” committing LLCC to promote academic access and success as well as personal development for all students.
- The College demonstrates its responsiveness to external constituents in a many ways. For example, the Dean of District Learning Resources, along with staff at the College’s four Educational Service Areas, works with the local high schools interested in offering dual credit coursework. Collaborating with the College’s K-12 districts has led to academic programs such as JumpStart, First Semester, and Higher Education Academic Transfer (HEAT).

**Team Determination on Criterion One:**

XX Criterion is met  
 \_\_\_ Criterion is met with concerns  
 \_\_\_ Criterion is not met

**Summary Statement on Criterion One:**

Criterion One is met and no Commission follow-up is recommended.

**CRITERION TWO: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct.** The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

**Core Component 2A:** The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Board Policy defines standards of ethical behavior by the divisions of Instruction, Student Affairs, Finance, Facilities, Human Resources, Foundation, Information Technology, Research Planning and Institutional Improvement, and Public Relations and Marketing. Division-specific policies and procedures embed integrity into the everyday operations of the College's financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions.

**Core Component 2B:** The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The College presents itself clearly and completely to its students and the public through publications which include but are not limited to the LLCC website, Catalog, Forward magazine, and program-specific publications. Information includes details on programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, and accreditation relationships.

**Core Component 2C:** The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

**Subcomponent 1.** The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

**Subcomponent 2.** The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution’s internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

**Subcomponent 3.** The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.

**Subcomponent 4.** The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- In 2010 the Board approved joining the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment to ensure the sustainability of the College’s facilities. Such action commits the College to implementing a comprehensive plan that pursues climate neutrality. Similarly, the Board supported a contract with CTS Group of St. Louis to identify College energy conservation projects with a payback of 20 years or less. Collectively, such actions suggest the Board priorities include the long-term preservation and enhancement of the College.
- LLCC Board members work under an “undue influence” policy which contributes to the integrity of Board action by directing Board members to avoid conflicts of interest. Board policy stipulates all members of the Board, including the Student Trustee, shall avoid any conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety; members of the Board who have a direct or indirect interest in any matter presented to the Board shall not participate in the discussion, decision, vote or proceedings of the Board in connection therewith.
- Day-to-day management of the College is the responsibility of the administration, faculty, and staff. Much of this work is accomplished through shared governance teams and work groups. For example, curriculum decisions and approvals are accomplished through consent agenda without discussion, as are new programs recommended by the shared governance curriculum team.

**Core Component 2D:** The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- LLCC’s commitment to freedom of expression for faculty and students and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning are guaranteed by faculty collective

bargaining agreement and by board policies.

**Core Component 2E:** The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.

**Subcomponent 2.** Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- An Institutional Review Board process is utilized for approval to conduct research at LLCC. To ensure protection for human subjects, requests are routed through the Planning and Institutional Improvement office and reviewed by the President's Cabinet.
- Faculty and librarians instruct students in the economic, legal, and social issues involved in applying ethical and legal standards with information access and distribution.

**Team Determination on Criterion Two:**

Criterion is met  
 Criterion is met with concerns  
 Criterion is not met

**Summary Statement on Criterion Two:**

Criterion Two is met and no Commission follow-up is recommended.

**CRITERION THREE: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support.** The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

**Core Component 3A:** The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

**Subcomponent 1.** Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by

students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Program Advisory Committees aid in ensuring both currency and appropriateness by consulting on matters such as the skills needed to work in the field, content and subject matter, nature of work experience, the employers' ability to staff vacancies, and the performance of graduates in the field. Similarly, transfer program faculty meet with other college and university faculties with an emphasis on creating articulation/transfer agreements.
- The student learning outcomes for both associate degree and certificate programs are articulated in CurricUNET and apply regardless of how (face-to-face, online, hybrid) and where (main campus, education service area, dual credit) the degree and certificate coursework is delivered.

**Core Component 3B:** The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

**Subcomponent 1.** The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.

**Subcomponent 3.** Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

**Subcomponent 4.** The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.

**Subcomponent 5.** The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- LLCC's general education curriculum is based on the needs of the College's constituents and is aligned with its mission, vision, and core values. The general education philosophy guided development of the College's student learning outcomes of critical thinking, cultural and global awareness, information fluency, communication, quantitative and scientific reasoning, and technology competency.
- The College utilizes CurricUNET to ensure that courses in degree programs contribute to the general education student learning outcomes and are linked to at least one general education outcome. For example, Composition 111 and 112 align with the communication and information fluency general education learning outcomes.
- The College aligns course and degree learning outcomes with needs identified through the strategic planning processes, assuring all degree-seeking students are engaged in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information, mastering modes of inquiry or creative work, developing skills adaptable to changing environments, and recognizing the human and cultural diversity of the world in which they live and work.

**Core Component 3C:** The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.

**Subcomponent 2.** All instructors are appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

**Subcomponent 3.** Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.

**Subcomponent 5.** Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

**Subcomponent 6.** Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

- Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The College employed 130 full-time and 245 adjunct (FTE of 127) faculty members in fiscal year 2012. This staffing level produced a reasonable faculty-to-student ratio of 1:18. The College regularly reviews full-time to part-time (FT/PT) contact hour ratios to ensure sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members.
- The academic deans work closely with faculty to appropriately fill non-teaching assignments such as adjunct, dual-credit, course, and assessment coordinator positions and representation within the College's shared governance structure.
- LLCC screens faculty for transfer disciplines by requiring candidates to hold an earned master's or doctoral degree and at least 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline and to be willing and able to teach a substantive range of courses in the discipline. In the career-technical disciplines, faculty must have at least 2,000 hours of work experience in a field related to the discipline, possess any additional qualifications as required by any law, rule, or regulation, and to be able and willing to teach a substantive range of courses in the discipline.
- Faculty are evaluated regularly in accordance with collective bargaining and institutional policies. The Vice President of Academic Services and the division dean review all full-time, non-tenured faculty members annually; the division dean provides full-time, tenured faculty members with a written evaluation at least once every three years. The Academic Dean or the Academic Program Coordinator review adjunct faculty during the initial semester of employment and regularly thereafter. Students complete faculty evaluations on a predetermined schedule.
- Professional development is addressed in the Collective Bargaining Agreement as an essential function of full-time faculty. Support is provided through multiple sources including budgets of Faculty Senate Professional Development Committee, academic departments and the Vice President of Academic Services.
- Full-time faculty must be on campus 26 hours over four or more days each week, and be available to students through at least six scheduled office hours each week.
- Institutional funding is allotted for academic support staff to stay current in their respective fields. For example, the financial aid advising staff regularly participates in professional development provided by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, the Veterans Administration, the Department of Education, and NASFAA. In addition, the College is closed on two professional development days so that all faculty and staff can engage in professional development activities.

**Core Component 3D:** The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

**Subcomponent 5.** The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- LLCC provides a variety of support services suited to the needs of their students, including academic advisors, student development professionals, or counselors, trained in career development theory. The College utilizes a variety of career inventories (e.g., O-Net, the Myers-Briggs, Career Cruising) to help students select a career path and corresponding program of study. Counseling services are available to assist students with personal adjustment, relationship concerns, career/life planning and balancing school with work, family and social life.
- Entering students demonstrate readiness through ACT and SAT scores, placement tests, or previous coursework. For those not prepared for college-level mathematics, reading, and/or writing, the College provides a developmental education program intended to build discipline-specific competency.
- Academic advisors interpret placement scores and assist students with selection of courses and registration forms; they discuss career goals, academic progress, and difficulties that may impact academic success.
- The College library houses an extensive collection of materials along with many electronic information databases which effectively meet the needs for classes, labs, and instructional technologies.

**Core Component 3E:** The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

**Subcomponent 1.** Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and

contribute to the educational experience of its students.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Student life and intercollegiate athletics, clubs and activities extend learning beyond the classroom and help students build professional networks useful in career advancement. The cocurricular activities provide opportunities for students to develop teamwork and leadership skills.
- The institution demonstrates its claims for achievement of its mission through programs and services focused on practical education that provide affordable career opportunities for its students, community engagement, and community economic development.

**Team Determination on Criterion Three:**

Criterion is met  
 Criterion is met with concerns  
 Criterion is not met

**Summary Statement on Criterion Three:**

Criterion Three is met and no Commission follow-up is recommended.

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

**Core Component 4A:** The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites

for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

**Subcomponent 5.** The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

**Subcomponent 6.** The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Academic programs undergo systematic review every five years to evaluate quality indicators which measure enrollment, retention/persistence, course/program completion rates, length of time to complete, licensure examination pass rates, direct instructional expenditure per student credit hour, faculty/student ratios, and student learning assessment.
- LLCC only transcribes credit earned at colleges and universities accredited by any of the six regional accrediting associations. Credit awarded by examination adheres to guidelines established by the American Council on Education (ACE) and includes both the CLEP and AP programs. Applicable credit for military training also follows ACE guidelines.
- LLCC ensures alignment of program outcomes with criteria for professional certification and licensure as well as quality standards in preparing graduates for work in the respective fields. The College maintains specialized and programmatic accreditations where appropriate.
- The College monitors licensure and certification pass rates and consults graduates for feedback on the currency and effectiveness of programs and courses. Data collected include educational status, employment status, salary, employment start-ups, geographic location of employment, and satisfaction with employment.

**Core Component 4B:** The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- LLCC redefined the general education and student learning outcomes through participation in the HLC Assessment Academy from 2007 to 2011.
- The College uses three processes to assess its general education outcomes: class-level assessment, general education assessment by rubrics, and standardized testing. Course and program outcomes are measured through Course Assessment Summary (CAS) and Program Assessment Summary (PAS) prepared by faculty. Career and Technical programs are assessed in part by results on national licensure exams.
- The College's cocurricular programs utilize the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) to establish goals related to achievement and improvement. Student Life uses CAS guidelines to conduct a full program review every five years.
- Each academic program in the Health Professions division collects clinical assessment measures to evaluate program learning outcomes. Clinical evaluation forms are linked directly to the course and program outcomes to determine whether students are meeting cognitive, affective, and psychomotor types of learning outcomes.
- The institution's processes and methodologies to assess and improve student learning demonstrate best practice methods though the use of nationally developed assessment methods including HLC Academy, best practice conferences, rubrics, standardized testing, faculty reports, and e-portfolios.

**Core Component 4C:** The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their

determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The President’s Cabinet establishes key performance goals for student persistence and completion that are ambitious yet appropriate to LLCC’s mission, student populations, and educational programs. Key Performance Indicators for student persistence and completion are monitored via the College’s dashboard.
- LLCC’s Institutional Research office systematically collects data related to student retention, persistence, and program completion and prepares enrollment trend reports depicting five-year student retention and success rates by instructional method, course location, program classification, and student demographics.
- The College’s five-year and annual Academic Program Review processes use retention, persistence and completion data to inform decision making.
- LLCC uses CCSSE and SSI data, along with other institutional data to shape decisions and formulate strategies. Collectively, the institution’s processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing persistence, retention, and completion data reflect good practice.

**Team Determination on Criterion Four:**

XX Criterion is met  
 \_\_\_ Criterion is met with concerns  
 \_\_\_ Criterion is not met

**Summary Statement on Criterion Four:**

Criterion Four is met and no Commission follow-up is recommended.

**CRITERION FIVE: Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness.** The institution’s resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

**Core Component 5A:** The institution’s resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution’s resource allocation process ensures that its educational

purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.

**Subcomponent 3.** The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.

**Subcomponent 5.** The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and plans for the future as evidenced by the financial ratios reported to HLC. LLCC's tax revenue is \$3,641 per FTE student compared to the state average of \$3,116 per FTE.
- Approximately 56% of credit hours are delivered by full-time faculty. Numbers of administrative, professional, and classified staff members reported to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) in the annual salary survey are comparable to LLCC's cohort group of Illinois community colleges indicating an appropriate level of human resources.
- As a locally controlled community college which does not allocate revenue outside of its immediate scope of operation, the institution is not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas for purposes other than educational program needs.
- The six goals of LLCC (Student Access and Success, Diversity and Cultural Competency, Economic Responsiveness, Community Engagement, Financial Strength, and Operational Strength), are aligned with its mission, and are realistic as stated in broad enough terms to be adaptable to changing situations involving the College's organization, resources, and opportunities.
- Staff members are appropriately qualified and trained commensurate with the level of responsibility, and norms for institutions of higher education. Qualifications are verified by official transcripts.
- Budgets and institutional expenditures are monitored monthly on a global level and are reported to the Board of Trustees in monthly financial statements. Departmental budget managers manage expenditures which are monitored on a quarterly basis in meetings held between departmental budget managers and a member of budgeting office staff.

**Core Component 5B:** The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and

students—in the institution’s governance.

**Subcomponent 2.** The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight for the institution’s financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution enables the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- LLCC is governed by an elected, eight-member Board of Trustees. The President utilizes a Cabinet and a Shared Governance structure, involving administration, faculty, and staff, to assist in the day-to-day operation of the College.
- The institution’s governing Board is knowledgeable about the institution and provides oversight. Board Policy articulates the Board’s roles and duties and establishes the Board as the College’s policy-making and oversight body.

**Core Component 5C:** The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

**Subcomponent 3.** The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution’s sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.

**Subcomponent 5.** Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                   \_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- To ensure resource allocations follow mission and institutional priorities, LLCC’s strategic goals align with its mission and each strategy considered in the planning process is tied to at least one of the College’s six goals. The President’s Cabinet reviews strategies for their ability to contribute to the overall strategic plan.

- Budgeting is incorporated into the planning process; the President's Cabinet determines if the requested funds can be granted for the strategy and determines the source of the funds. Planning strategies are coded by funding source and prioritized during this final step in the process. Once completed, the College has an annual plan and a proposed budget that are subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.
- The planning process involves internal and external constituent groups. Once senior leadership completes a draft plan, all faculty and staff are brought into the planning process during Institutional Improvement Day. This day's activities are designed to facilitate college-wide input regarding strategies for the next fiscal year's plan. Afternoon sessions engage department and unit-level discussion of planning initiatives for the next year. Planning initiatives identified during Institutional Improvement Day are moved into consideration in the planning process at the Planning Leadership Roundtable.
- The institution's plans anticipate possible resource fluctuations. A strategy can be moved into the budgeting process (because it requires new funding), combined with another strategy, deferred, eliminated, put on hold, moved directly into the plan (because it did not require new funding), omitted by a member of the President's Cabinet, or categorized as a low priority.
- The institution's planning anticipates emergency factors. Reviewing LLCC's Environmental Scan allows emerging factors such as demographic shifts to inform the planning process. The Environmental Scan also brings into the planning process detailed data on funding and finances, facilities and budget, student body profiles and student satisfaction, faculty and staff, academic programs, enrollment, and academic achievement.

**Core Component 5D:** The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

**Team Determination:**    XX Core Component is met  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- LLCC develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations. The College's IR and ITS staff members determine the needs of departments and units related to collecting, storing, and accessing data through their representation on various teams such as Academic Assessment, Program Review, and AQIP Steering teams. Institutional data, including Key Performance Indicators (Dashboard) are made accessible to all authorized users and systems, as defined in institutional policies.

- The President's Cabinet developed key performance indicators to measure progress within the College's six goal areas. Each performance indicator includes an analysis of trend data associated with a goal. The Dashboard illustrates graphically the progress achieved within the strategic plan. The institution uses this information to learn from operational experience and apply that learning to improve. Improvements are carried out at the strategic level through the strategic planning process and through process improvements at the operational level.

**Team Determination on Criterion Five:**

- Criterion is met  
 Criterion is met with concerns  
 Criterion is not met

**Summary Statement on Criterion Five:**

Criterion Five is met and no Commission follow-up is recommended.

**Summary of Panel Recommendations regarding fulfillment of the criteria for accreditation**

**A. Affiliation Status**

**1. Recommendation:**

The Systems Appraisal Feedback Report, Quality Checkup Report, and Quality Highlights indicate that the institution provided evidence that it complies with each of the Five Criteria for Accreditation and their Core Components. The Reaffirmation Panel agrees that the Criteria for Accreditation are all met.

2. **Rationale:** The Panel's rationale for this conclusion is spelled out above for each of the five Criteria for Accreditation.

**Criterion-related Monitoring Required (report, focused visit):**

Monitoring: none  
 Rationale: n/a

**B. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action**

None recommended

### III. Participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP)

#### A. Comments and counsel on specific improvement projects

Since joining AQIP the College has established seven AQIP Action Projects. Four projects have been retired. The *New Student Experience: Stage 1- Designed /Ready for Implementation* project's purpose was to develop a new student orientation program. As a result a full-time Director of Retention and Student Success was hired. The position provides oversight, design and implementation of an early alert process and mandatory student orientation program. This Action Project aligns with Category 1 - *Helping Students Learn*

Another project that supports Category 8 – *Planning and Continuous Improvement* was titled *Continuous Quality Improvement: Learning to Make Informed, Systematic Decisions*. The project succeeded in bringing all aspects of the College together to craft a quality improvement culture. While efforts are still ongoing, the College has made strides in educating its employees on the components of a continuous improvement model.

*Establishing an Effective Shared Governance Structure* Action Project links to Category 5 – *Leading and Communicating*. The purpose of this project was to review, revise and evaluate the College's communication and representation structure. The project resulted in newly established campus shared governance teams. These groups represent a cross-section of the campus community. Initial results show an improvement in communication and knowledge level of the campus constituents in the College's governance process.

The Action Project *Strategic Planning* represents work with Category 8 – *Leading and Communicating*. The project provided an opportunity for the College to review its strategic planning process. Using Institutional Improvement Day as a springboard for conversation, the Action Project team guided volunteers to identify trends and organize them into themes. As a result of their work, recommendations for strategic planning ideas were presented to the Board of Trustees and subsequently approved. This project has resulted in the establishment of another continuous improvement process for LLCC.

Three projects are currently active. *Process Mapping: Systematic Documenting of Key Processes*, representing Category 6 – *Supporting Institutional Operations*. The purpose of this project is to institute a process mapping model into the Institutional Research Department that could be employed throughout the College.

LLCC has two Category 1 - *Helping Students Learn* Action Projects active: *Using Multiple Measures for Placement into Mathematics Courses* and *Electronic Portfolio Pilot Project*. The first project will be used to improve math placement scores. The second is designed to enhance the assessment and documentation of student learning outcomes at the program level.

It is apparent by the choice of AQIP Action Projects that the institution regards all of the AQIP Categories to be important and worthy of focus. Lincoln Land has pursued activities in context with its mission, vision and values, connecting actions to its strategic plan and goals. The

projects also reveal concern about having all campuses operate in a more consistent manner with improved communication and coordination. In particular, the Action Projects have sought to solicit input and engage participation from a wide number of faculty, staff, and administration.

## **B. Comments and counsel on key institutional processes and systems**

As result of feedback from the system appraisal team and the quality checkup team, the College has made efforts to improve its benchmarking activities by introducing the PACE survey. The survey also helps the College to uncover measures that gauge cultural changes occurring as a result of its quality improvement efforts.

LLCC continues to work on improving student learning by investigating the potential to align the program review data with the general education (institutional level) learning outcomes results. The Student Life area is now involved in establishing learning outcomes that support the institutional outcomes for its programs and activities. It is expected that this information will help the College improve in its efforts to increase the learning experience for students in all aspects of college life.

The reviewers noted that the College's academic assessment process links the Student Learning Outcomes at both the program and course levels. Data collected from the assessment review can be used to inform academic decisions. LLCC is encouraged to continue its work in this area.

The Quality Check-up Team noted, "Lincoln Land Community College has a well-designed process for strategic planning that is systematic, integrated, strategic, and operational." The College made use of several Action Projects to help improve efforts in this area. As the College explores ideas for new Action Projects, it is encouraged to consider Projects to address the three opportunities for improvement noted by the Quality Checkup team: 1) develop a process to better determine need relative to the public good, 2) aggregate the program review information with general education student learning outcome results, and 3) improve allocation planning to support projects and initiatives.

## **C. Comments and counsel on the institution's culture of quality and its quality program or infrastructure.**

LLCC presented evidence that it has taken the continuous improvement opportunities provided in the AQIP process seriously. The College began several efforts to improve their ongoing processes. The strategic planning process has benefited from college-wide planning initiatives described previously. Communication and an understanding of strategic planning have improved as a result. The College provided training for its faculty and staff in how to create process plans. LLCC is encouraged to continue its work in this area. Updating the employee orientation and in-service information may benefit its new employees.

The College has used its Action Projects to make improvements in the areas of planning and

student success. This indicates LLCC is cognizant of the value of these projects. The College is encouraged to continue to use these projects for exploration of ideas and systems improvements.

**Summary of panel comments and counsel about the organization's commitment to continuous quality improvement and its participation in AQIP**

Lincoln Land Community College has been a member of AQIP for only one cycle, yet already demonstrates practices that embrace the AQIP philosophy and model. It is expected that the institution will take peer review comments seriously and apply itself to the constructive feedback provided through the recent Systems Appraisal and Quality Checkup.

The Reaffirmation Panel acknowledges and commends Lincoln Land Community College for voluntary participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program of the Higher Learning Commission in its pursuit of continuous quality improvement.