

Assurance Argument

Henry Ford College

Review date: 10-27-2025

Welcome Message for Review Team

Henry Ford College is a public community college in Dearborn, Michigan, enrolling 13,000 students and offering a variety of certificate and workforce development and training programs, associate degrees, 3+1 programs, and a bachelor's degree, as well as dual-enrollment and early college options. To provide the high-quality, transformational education promised by the mission, the College supports students' complex educational backgrounds, abilities, and goals.

HFC accommodates students with diverse races and ethnicities, ages, course loads, and schedules. The population has become more diverse each year. HFC draws students mainly from its location in Dearborn, which has one of the largest Arab populations in the United States, and neighboring Detroit, which, according to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2024, is nearly 77% African American. The College offers a robust English Language Institute, as many members of the predominately Arab American Dearborn community speak a primary language other than English. Approximately 60% of the College's students attend part-time. Furthermore, 66% receive some form of Federal financial aid, indicating that HFC serves a significantly large population of students classified as economically disadvantaged.

HFC is firmly community-based, community-located, community-connected, and community-serving. The College serves its broad local and regional community first and foremost, and it recognizes the importance of the numerous community partnerships that help both the community and the College thrive. HFC offers many programs and activities that are accessible and welcoming to all members of our community.

HFC also contributes substantially to the local economy by generating income, responding to the community's workforce needs, and producing a strong return on investment for its students, their families, and local taxpayers, whose reliable passages of millages over the years have supported the College.

As part of HFC's mission, it also serves broader audiences and State and national initiatives. HFC counts its rich diversity as one of its distinguishing and most valued characteristics. It embraces a culture of belonging and provides opportunities for all — on campus or online.

1 – Mission

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

1.A. Mission Alignment

The institution's educational programs, enrollment profile and scope of operations align with its publicly articulated mission.

Argument

Through its well-publicized mission, Henry Ford College commits itself to the welfare and success of its diverse student body, community members, and other constituents. Ample evidence proves that the College fulfills this mission.

The College's mission drives the strategic plan, which then guides curriculum, program offerings, and other institutional operations.

Development and Promotion of the Mission

HFC's mission, vision, and values are the product of shared governance, ensuring college-wide buy-in and alignment with students' diverse backgrounds and goals. They are reviewed and revised as needed with each new strategic plan. (See the Strategic Planning Team's meeting minutes , which reiterate that the strategic plan exists within the parameters of the mission, vision, and values). Criterion 4 discusses the strategic planning process in detail. Changes to the mission must ultimately be approved by the Board of Trustees.

The mission is well publicized on the College's website (About HFC), is posted campus-wide, and is embedded in HFC's strategic plan webpage. Reviewing the history of HFC, also on the website, shows how the mission has evolved with its constituents' needs.

Alignment with Strategic Plan and Enrollment Profile

The alignment of the mission and the strategic plan is strong evidence that the mission guides College operations. (See the strategic plans for 2016-2020 (which was extended through 2021 during COVID restrictions), 2022-2024 , and 2025-2027 .) While the strategic plan has evolved to meet the changing needs of students, stakeholders, and the community, it remains rooted in the mission.

The strategic plan has evolved to focus on achieving measurable outcomes, reflecting the mission's description of HFC as "a student-centered, evidence-based college... [that is] measured by the success of our students" and strengthening the College's accountability to the public. The 2016-2020 plan focused on general strategies for enrollment and student retention without setting

specific numerical goals. While most of the goals in the 2022-2024 plan gave precise benchmarks for success, some were vague or imprecise:

- Increase enrollment of underrepresented student populations in programs leading to high-opportunity outcomes, especially STEAM, Health Sciences, and the Skilled Trades.
- Raise the institutional Graduation Rate “toward” 15%.

However, in the 2025-2027 plan, all goals are associated with precise, measurable metrics for success.

Furthermore, each iteration of the strategic plan is more focused and explicitly student-centered, as the mission dictates. The 2016-2020 plan had wide-ranging goals, such as student success, engagement, enrollment, community outreach, and organizational effectiveness, with an emphasis on teaching improvements, partnerships, and academic advising. While it mentioned diversity and inclusion, it did not explicitly prioritize them. Beginning with the 2022-2024 plan, the strategic priorities focused exclusively on student success and coalesced under the ABIDE initiative. ABIDE stands for Advancing Belonging, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity, which reflects the mission’s emphasis on student success and empowerment and on “foster[ing] diversity, inclusion, understanding, and acceptance to prepare learners to succeed in a global society.” In the 2025-2027 plan, all four strategic goals focus on student success specifically in terms of achieving equity across diverse student populations.

Focusing on inclusion and diversity- and equity-related themes is essential given the College’s enrollment profile. As seen in the Fast Facts documents for 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025, HFC is committed to accommodating students of increasingly diverse races, ethnicities, ages, and schedules. Furthermore, changes in demographic reporting have enabled the College to analyze that diversity more precisely. For example, in 2020-2021, 58% of students identified as White. Beginning in 2022-2023, the categories for race and ethnicity were broken down more specifically to count students who identified as Middle Eastern/North African. In 2022-2023 HFC’s students identified as 43% White and 15% Middle Eastern/North African, and in 2024-2025 students identified as 31% White and 25% Middle Eastern/North African.

Alignment with Scope of Operations

HFC’s mission is to serve both students and the community. Thus, the College’s scope of operations is necessarily broad, as captured by the Local Strategic Value Resolutions for fiscal year (FY) 2020, FY 2021, FY 2022, FY 2023, FY 2024, and FY 2025, which document how the College achieves best practices for three categories:

- Category A: Economic Development and Business or Industry Partnerships (for additional discussion, see sub-criterion 1.B)

- Category B: Educational Partnerships (also see criterion 3)
- Category C: Community Services (also see sub-criteria 1.B, 1.C, 4.A, and 4.B)

The reliable passage of millages over the years conveys the local community's deep appreciation of the mission and trust in the College's ability to achieve it. The latest millage proposal (an 8-year renewal) went on the ballot in 2024; 66% voted in favor (see certificate of determination). Since property taxes account for a significant portion of HFC's operating budget (20% per publicly disseminated millage facts), this illustrates the ongoing community support that is crucial for the College's financial stability and maintenance of high-quality programs and services.

The College's information campaign for the 2024 millage renewal aligns with the mission's community focus. In the months preceding the vote, the College educated the community by providing a facts sheet and presentation, which succinctly captured the scope of operations and services for both students and the community. Furthermore, the full-time faculty bargaining unit led an advocacy campaign that included several mailings and an impressive list of endorsements (mailer 1, 2, and 3). Presentations were given by the College President, Cabinet members, the President of the full-time faculty bargaining unit, and other HFC supporters to many civic and community-based organizations. They included the Dearborn City Council, the Dearborn Federation of Neighborhood Associations, several schools and local religious and cultural organizations, and service organizations such as the Dearborn Rotary and League of Women Voters. Following the millage's passage, the President expressed thanks and promised the College's continued commitment to the community.

Alignment with Financial Needs

To realize its student-centered mission and strategic plan, HFC strives to ensure a high-quality education while maintaining affordability and access.

Consistent with its focus on serving students, for each of the past five fiscal years, HFC has committed more than half of its operating budget to teaching and learning, followed by administrative and student services. (See Fast Facts for 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025.) Criterion 4 analyzes the budget in detail.

The College strives to minimize financial obstacles that could interfere with student success. Given that most students receive financial aid, the College keeps tuition as low as possible (having the second lowest average tuition among Michigan community colleges in 2025, per the Community College Review) and has a tuition freeze guarantee for students who graduate within four years of initial enrollment.

HFC also promotes other special programs that make college more affordable. Some target high school students, where tuition is paid for by the school district (dual enrollment, Henry Ford Early College, and Henry Ford Collegiate Academy). Detroit Promise, which is funded by the City of Detroit, provides a tuition-free pathway to a degree or certificate for Detroit high school graduates. Other programs target older learners. For example, Futures for Frontliners is a partnership with the State of Michigan that offers a tuition-free pathway for essential workers during the COVID pandemic. Michigan Reconnect covers in-district tuition for adults 25 and older who lack a college degree and was briefly expanded to include ages 21-24. The HFC Debt Forgiveness Program makes returning to college more affordable for students with existing college debt who “stopped out” before attaining a degree. HFC’s Student Outreach and Support Office administers grants as well. The Student Emergency Aid Fund helps students facing unexpected emergencies or expenses, such as car repairs or transportation issues, utilities shut-off notices, or food insecurity. Perkins Cost of Attendance grants offer similar forms of emergency relief, while also providing funds for tuition, books/supplies, or technology for students with unmet need in Career and Technical Education programs.

The Henry Ford College Foundation maintains strong community ties and provides philanthropic support. The mission of the Foundation mirrors the College’s commitment to student access and success and to community engagement. See the Foundation’s summaries of scholarship awards for 2019-2024 , grants, and the 2025 presentation to the Board of Trustees.

Efficiently achieving academic goals minimizes students’ financial challenges. To that end, counselors and advisors help students determine their goals and develop an efficient educational plan, and students may easily track their progress via the student portal. HFC’s Career Services Office helps current students and alumni clarify professional goals and offers resources for achieving them. Employers and faculty may also refer to that office when counseling students. (Criterion 3 provides additional information.)

Alignment with Programs

Academic programs align with the College’s mission to “[transform] lives and [build] better futures by providing outstanding education.” (Criterion 3 provides more details about the programs and student success outcomes.)

HFC’s academic programs serve many goals and incorporate the College’s five Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), which correspond directly to the mission (see the mission/outcomes comparison chart). Certificate programs are occupationally focused to lead directly to employment. For students who want higher-level education and credentials, two categories of associate degrees exist: career/technical and transfer. Participation in the Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA), MiTransfer Pathways, and Transfer Bridges to the Humanities @ University of Michigan facilitate transfer to a four-year college or university. The Learn4ward guaranteed transfer option provides a seamless path to one of four top-tier universities: University of Michigan—Dearborn, Wayne State University, Eastern Michigan University, and Davenport University Online. HFC offers a Bachelor of Science Degree in Culinary Arts, too.

The College provides information on each program to facilitate student exploration and decision-making. The College website and catalog describe the programs and give information on employment opportunities. For example, the Environmental Studies, Digital and Graphic Arts, and Business Administration programs, like other HFC program webpages, list career opportunities and link to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics *Occupational Outlook Handbook*.

Many students seek rapid, gainful employment. They benefit from programs that offer laddered credentials, such as certificates that count toward a degree. See, for example, the Culinary Arts and Hotel/Restaurant Management programs, which offer stacked certificates, associate, and bachelor's degrees. The support that Johnson Controls, Inc. (JCI) provided to HFC's HVAC program is also evidence of HFC's commitment to gainful employment. In 2025, JCI awarded \$190,000 to the College to upgrade its HVAC curriculum by condensing a two-year program into ten months, increasing the number of certifications, and "developing new associate degree pathways in energy production, energy renewal, and conservation."

Individual student experiences further portray the mission in action. Joshua Ragland dropped out of high school, obtained his GED, and then enrolled at HFC when he was 25 years old. The first person in his family to earn a college degree, Ragland has earned two associate degrees and three certificates from HFC, and he is completing a third associate degree in cybersecurity. He not only obtained employment in his field of study but also was promoted twice in one year and currently works as a security analyst. Other examples include Culinary Arts program graduate Tiffany Williams, who has become a successful local entrepreneur, and three graduates from the Ophthalmic Technician Program, who have advanced to leadership positions in this high-demand field.

HFC's Workforce and Professional Development programs meet the needs of local businesses and industry while advancing students' careers. Options include professional education (skilled trades and apprenticeship programs), customized company training, noncredit and short-term classes and workshops, and online continuing education courses.

HFC's curriculum also focuses on the mission's goal "to prepare learners to succeed in a global society." Civil Society and Culture—US and Global is one of five Institutional Learning Outcomes. In addition, the English Language Institute (ELI) provides low-cost, high-quality English instruction in credit and noncredit courses that prepare students to transition to the College curriculum (ELI's mission and goals and course placement). Many of the pathways for the Liberal Arts Associate in Arts Degree emphasize human diversity.

1.B. Mission and Public Good

The institution's operation of the academic enterprise demonstrates its commitment to serving the public good.

Argument

The College relies on local property tax revenue as a major component of its operating budget and thus is dedicated to public service, especially at the local level. As the mission states, "We anticipate and respond to the needs of our stakeholders, exceed their expectations and serve the public good." Such service addresses economic, community, and environmental interests, many of which are documented in the Local Strategic Value Resolution, which is used in the State's formula for community college appropriations.

Economic Interests

HFC contributes significantly to the local economy. A 2023 study by Lightcast revealed the following results for fiscal year (FY) 2020-2021 (see HFC's 2026-2030 Capital Outlay Plan, pp. 36-37):

- Through operations spending, student spending, and alumni impact, HFC added \$1.4 billion in income to the economy of the area it serves (Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties), which equates to 16,487 jobs.
- HFC is a wise investment of students' time and money. Students' annual rate of return on investment (ROI) averaged 17.7%, making HFC a better investment than the stock market, whose 30-year average annual ROI was 10.5%.
- Local taxpayers also benefit, with a 10.9% average annual ROI for FY 2020-2021.
- A strong return on investment statewide was forecasted as well. The study forecasts that through economic growth and public and private sector savings, "[f]or every dollar invested [by the state] in HFC in FY 2020-21, people in Michigan will receive \$17.90 in return, for as long as HFC's FY 2020-21 students remain active in the state workforce."

The College's economic impact helped motivate the most recent millage renewal, which was approved by 66% of voters. According to an *Arab American News* article in 2024 (Dearbornites urged to vote YES on Henry Ford College ballot proposal—Here is why), "An outside party evaluated the economic impact of the college in 2022 and found \$1.4 billion of economic activity and 20,000 jobs are supported as a result of the college."

HFC readily adapts to the community's workforce needs. The College President's involvement at the State level informs these initiatives. In 2020, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer appointed the president to a newly created Workforce Development Board, which collaborated with elected officials and leaders in business, industry, and higher education statewide on initiatives to position the State to fill jobs of the future. This was a natural fit given the College's history of partnering with business and industry and supporting statewide workforce development

initiatives. The President was reappointed in 2024. In 2023, the Governor appointed the President to co-chair the new Higher Education Workgroup to help lead the Growing Michigan Together Council. Governor Whitmer stated that the purpose of the workgroup was to provide advice on topics such as "ways to prepare Michigan's workforce for in-demand jobs and emerging industries" and "long-term funding solutions for higher education."

HFC's economic partnerships also benefit the community. Some of these come from grants that recognize the College as a leader in industrial education. In 2020, through its partnership with the Workforce Intelligence Network (WIN) for Southeast Michigan, HFC joined forces with ten community colleges and six State agencies focused on workforce development and received \$100,000 of the \$4 million, four-year Closing the Skills Gap grant from the Department of Labor. In 2021, HFC was part of a consortium of eight community colleges through WIN and the Southeast Michigan Community Alliance (SEMCA) that was awarded another four-year U.S. Department of Labor grant, Building an Industry Infinity Supply Chain, this time for \$10 million. As the WIN Executive Director stated, the grant will be used to "'upskill individuals in the region to succeed in middle- and high-skilled occupations.'" The third-quarter monitoring report describes the project in detail and summarizes HFC's progress.

Currently, HFC is embarking on a new project, Workforce 360, to address the significant skilled labor shortage in Southeast Michigan. By modernizing labs and developing new academic pathways to achieve industry-recognized credentials, this program will create a direct education-to-employment pipeline for a range of students, including high school graduates, adult learners, veterans, and under-represented groups. This 36-month project, which runs through June 2028, is funded by the \$3 million Peters Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. (See HFC's budget narrative.) Other partnerships are even more focused on meeting the needs of local employers. To train and hire Instrumentation Technicians, the Great Lakes Water Authority collaborated with HFC and Focus: HOPE to create apprenticeships. On the cutting edge of technology, HFC also recently partnered with Auto-ISAC to offer an Automotive Cybersecurity Training program. Additionally, for the second time, HFC has been named a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense (through 2028).

In the healthcare sector, in 2023, HFC and the Corewell Health system launched an innovative Nurse Immersive Clinical and Employment Agreement to ensure an adequate supply of well-trained RNs for positions in Southeast Michigan. The program provides hands-on, accelerated learning and offers substantial economic benefits, such as scholarships and guaranteed employment upon successful program completion. Eight HFC students were in the first cohort; they all completed the program and have accepted positions with Corewell Health. Both the students and the clinical sites provided positive feedback on the program.

At the program level, the School of Health and Human Services launched multiple initiatives to increase and accelerate degree completion to meet employment demand. The initiatives include a direct RN-to-BSN pathway developed in partnership with Eastern Michigan University (EMU) and Michigan State University (MSU), which is supported by a grant to address the increasing need for BSN-prepared nurses. To date, 138 students have enrolled in EMU's program. The Medical Assistant certificate program was redesigned to be completed in one academic year, and a new Medical Billing and Coding certificate program was created in response to industry partner feedback. Additionally, new programs in Sports Management and Exercise Science replaced the Fitness Leadership program, which had low enrollment and antiquated curriculum. Enrollment is building in these two new

programs, which provide transfer pathways and, for Exercise Science, the option to become a certified personal trainer.

This responsiveness to the needs of community stakeholders is further illustrated at the course level. For instance, based on feedback from local accounting firms on HFC's Business Administration Advisory Board, the curriculum in introductory courses in financial accounting and managerial accounting integrated Excel-based problem solving using authentic accounting data, which are skills needed for entry-level positions. Similarly, a course in graphic design (ART-245: Interactive Experience Design) responded to industry demand by including user experience (UX) theory and project-based learning. Criterion 3.D gives additional examples.

Community Interests

Given the comprehensive nature of the mission, HFC's commitment encompasses far more than the economic welfare of the community beyond the College.

While the pandemic created many challenges, it also provided opportunities for immediate community outreach where HFC could lead students by example. (For a summary, see "Good news and good deeds: Henry Ford College coronavirus response.") Early in the pandemic, when healthcare facilities faced life-threatening shortages, the School of Health and Human Services provided local healthcare facilities with ventilators and other supplies; other areas followed with additional donations. Outreach also included volunteering at coronavirus testing sites.

Recently, HFC's student chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (the student honor society) and the Student Nursing Association worked to make Narcan (naloxone) available on campus. In April 2025, the College hosted a public event that not only announced the Narcan dispensers and upcoming training but also sought to educate the community on addiction and substance use disorders more broadly ("HFC expands student wellness initiative, adds Narcan dispensers").

The College's participation in state-wide initiatives and discussions also serves the public good. Examples below illustrate the breadth of involvement:

- Governor Whitmer appoints HFC Trustee Irene Watts to statewide committee
- President Kavalhuna joins Mayor-Elect Hammoud's mayoral transition team
- Tracye Y. Davis joins MiLeap Student Basic Needs Task Force
- Governor Whitmer appoints HFC professor to Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs
- HFC student selected to statewide Collegiate Student Advisory Task Force

Beyond such focused initiatives, the College supports the community by sharing resources. The FCC-licensed radio station, WHFR, serves Dearborn and surrounding communities, and the Sisson Art Gallery, theater productions, and music performances welcome the public, as does the student-run restaurant, Fifty-One O One. The Hammond Planetarium provides public shows along with educational resources for teachers, and STEM Family Day strengthens the College's connection to the community while expanding access to learning beyond the classroom. The public may also rent space, provided College policies are followed. The facilities and events list reveals diverse use.

See sub-criteria 1.C and 3.D for additional examples of community involvement.

Environmental Interests

The College's commitment to the public good extends to sustainability and the environment. The webpage for Sustainable HFC summarizes the College's initiatives and student, staff, and community involvement.

One multi-faceted project deserves additional explanation. In 2019, the College embarked on a 20-year Integrated Energy Management Plan (IEMP) to achieve Global Best Practices in Energy Management and Education (see "College sets global best-practice energy standard through IEMP"). Through this plan, Johnson Controls Inc. (JCI) collaborated with HFC to upgrade the campus infrastructure in order to increase energy and water use efficiency and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Simultaneously, the IEMP has transformed the campus into a living classroom for a new energy-related curriculum: a one-year major for technicians, a two-year major for project managers, and even a possible path to a bachelor's degree in energy production (see "U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow visits HFC to celebrate major investment in sustainable energy and student careers"). A JCI Vice President stated,

We're thrilled to see how Henry Ford College, a member of the inaugural cohort of schools in the Johnson Controls Community College Partnership Program, is leveraging its fund to deploy an IEMP that leads the way in net zero higher education, contributes to a growing field and supports the workforce in its surrounding community.

The College is well positioned to be a leader in this field. HFC's IEMP coordinator presented the project at the AEE World Energy Conference & Expo in 2023. That same year, recognizing his leadership on the IEMP, an HFC Vice President was named one of Detroit's Notable Leaders in Energy. In 2024, a team from HFC presented again at the AEE World Energy Conference & Expo, reporting on the IEMP's implementation and major accomplishments, from education and community interests to environmental benefits, as well as plans to achieve future goals.

The College's commitment to environmental sustainability includes its xeriscaping program, which saves approximately 2 million gallons of water per year by creating native prairie landscapes rather than traditional lawns across many sections of the main campus. Xeriscaping also encourages native pollinators to frequent campus and beautify the local region.

Another highlight is the public Rouge River Gateway Trail along the main campus' perimeter. The Gateway Trail includes the Kingfisher Bluff, a carefully maintained scenic overlook to the Rouge River, located on the western edge of campus. The community is encouraged to visit campus to enjoy the natural environment. Free parking on campus provides access to these spaces.

1.C. Mission and Diversity of Society

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

Argument

HFC understands that civic engagement depends upon the ability to handle differences constructively and respectfully. This mindset permeates the institution, as captured by the webpage You Are Welcome at HFC, which pointedly asks, “How can people who are so different in so many ways actively participate in a supportive and multiculturally expansive community?” The College promises an answer through its mission to “foster diversity, inclusion, understanding, and acceptance to prepare learners to succeed in a global society.”

To help fulfill this promise, in 2021 the College contracted with an outside vendor to conduct a college-wide diversity climate study that solicited anonymous feedback from all employees and students (see article and final report). The President shared the findings and tentative plans to address shortcomings in two messages to the College community: a March 2021 update, followed by sharing of results in April 2021. In May 2021, two employee focus groups analyzed the survey results, noting strengths and opportunities for improvement. In a communication summarizing the focus groups, the President concluded, “The College should devote ongoing resources and attention to embedding DEI into our strategic efforts” and should strive to ensure that “inclusion and equity are as high a priority as diversity.” The strategic plans for 2022-2024 and 2025-2027 and the ABIDE Talent Management Strategy pursue these goals.

Recent organizational changes (further discussed in criterion 4) further reveal the College’s diversity-related efforts. In 2023, the College created a new position on the President’s Cabinet, Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB), and established a DEIB Advisory Council comprised of HFC colleagues and student representatives. Furthermore, the full-time faculty bargaining unit added a DEI Officer to its Executive Board in 2022 and created the Social Justice and Equity Committee (see Article VIII, section VII, of the Constitution for AFT Local 1650), which issued a statement on diversity that closely aligns with the College’s mission.

HFC treats its diversity as a gift. The College President has posted messages and videos to help educate the College community on a range of cultural, historic, and religious observances. Furthermore, the President’s office initiates visits to community organizations and meets with faith leaders, including local Imams, who represent the cultural and religious heritage of a large portion of the student body. Such outreach strengthens partnerships, promotes mutual understanding, and ensures that the College is responsive to the educational and social needs of the communities it serves. At the institutional level, the College supports student clubs such as the

African American Association, the Henry J. Bowers Focus Group (formerly the Black Males and QUEENS Focus Group), the Arab Student Union, the International Students Organization, the Latino and Hispanic Student Association, the Muslim Students Association, the Sexuality and Gender Acceptance Club (SAGA), the Yemeni Student Association, and more. These clubs not only act as support groups but also educate others. Events promoted by the Office of Student Activities include Black History Month, the Arab American Heritage Festival, Globe Fest, Latino/Hispanic Club's Day of the Dead, Disability Pride Month, and Campus Pride Month. Clubs and events welcome all students.

HFC nurtures healthy discourse related to ideological and political differences. Several examples are discussed in sub-criterion 2.D. They include membership in the Democracy Institute Consortium (see Democracy at HFC) and hosting educational political conventions and town halls open to the public. Events such as the Taking Action for Peace series increase awareness and foster informed debate while underscoring civic responsibility. The HFC Democracy Institute partnered with the Great Lakes Civility Project to host Civility Night on campus, featuring two renowned journalists who explained “the four pillars of civility” and what motivated the Civility Project. The event also featured breakout groups for participants to discuss their experiences. The article “A night for civility at Henry Ford College” appeared in the College’s student newspaper, *The Mirror News*.

Given the College’s student demographics, voter education and engagement initiatives are major focuses of the Office of Student Activities (OSA). In 2023, HFC joined the organization All In Campus Democracy and, as requested, submitted a report on the College’s civic engagement activities. That report documents collaboration among HFC students, faculty, and staff, external organizations, and political leaders to educate, motivate, and register students to vote. More recent activities included the Voter Engagement Bash in October 2024, which was produced in partnership with the Michigan Department of State, the League of Women Voters, and the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS), as well as less formal approaches such as voter information postcards. OSA annual reports demonstrate that educating the student body on the democratic process is a consistent theme (see 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024). Students and staff have many opportunities to volunteer in the community. The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service is a long-time annual event organized by HFC and the University of Michigan--Dearborn. Other examples include volunteering at a community food bank, helping with flood disaster cleanup, and promoting literacy. Service-learning projects provide yet another outlet for civic engagement (see sub-criterion 3.B). Students taking Honors Directed Study: Service Learning work on community-based projects with a range of local organizations, such as 826Michigan Detroit Robot Factory, Alternatives for Girls, Belle Isle Conservancy, Belle Isle Aquarium, Belle Isle Nature Center, Capuchin Soup Kitchen, Cass Community Social Services, Downtown Boxing Gym Youth Program, Gleaners Community Food Bank, Keep Growing Detroit, Mariners Inn, Urban Neighborhood Initiatives, and Wayne County Dispute Resolution Center. At the end of the semester, students give presentations at the Honors Symposium, reflecting on how the organization they worked with benefits the community.

Criterion 1 Summary

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

Argument

The College's mission is well publicized and comprehensive. It aligns with the evolving needs and goals of its diverse student body as well as those of the local community, business, and industry. The mission drives strategic and operational planning, curriculum development, student support services, community outreach, and other activities. While gainful employment and transfer are primary focuses, the College also strives to prepare students to be responsible, engaged citizens of the world.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A. Integrity

Actions taken by the institution's governing board, administration, faculty and staff demonstrate adherence to established policies and procedures.

Argument

The College's policies and procedures grow from its mission, which is founded upon explicitly stated values, including integrity:

- accountability;
- responsible stewardship;
- ethical conduct;
- honest dialogue; and
- sustainable practices.

Such values are evident in the institution's activities and in documentation that is publicly available on the College's website (see HFC Policies, Procedures, and Bylaws). Criterion 4 further illustrates how integrity underpins College planning and decision making; sub-criterion 2.E demonstrates how faculty apply academic integrity policies and procedures.

Employment

College policies, shared governance, contractual language, and the Human Resources Office (HR) establish standards for ethical treatment of all personnel and College stakeholders. HR's employee handbook covers key topics, including expectations for employee behavior and various protections.

Many measures focus on preventing conflicts of interest.

- Conflict of Interest, Conflicts of Commitment, Nepotism and Outside Activities Policy
- Full-time faculty bargaining agreement, Article X.B
- Adjunct faculty bargaining agreement, Article VIII
- Administrators bargaining agreement, Article II.G
- Conflict of interest disclosure
- Procedure for Royalties Associated with Textbooks and Other Educational Materials
- Operations Policy on Compliance Lobbying and Supplanting of Funds and Other Federal and State Laws, Rules, and Regulations

The hiring process itself emphasizes integrity and fairness. In January 2022, the College instituted the Advancing Belonging, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (ABIDE) Talent Management Strategy. It communicates HFC's belief that enhancing diversity through hiring is not only necessary to support the diverse student body but also feasible without compromising hiring standards. ABIDE's initiatives describe steps to prevent bias, for example, by evaluating the wording of job requirements and where positions are advertised (ABIDE manual, pp. 13, 16, and 18-19), by training hiring committee members on issues related to unconscious and unintentional bias (p. 15), and by having a certified Diversity Search Advocate on hiring committees (p. 22). Key shifts in the hiring and onboarding approach are summarized on pp. 28-29.

As shown by the documents below, the recent search for a Director of Admissions and Recruiting exemplifies the use and effectiveness of the ABIDE strategy.

- Overview of process and participants
- Procedural email to Search Committee
- Search Committee's application review report (based on redacted/blind resume formats)
- Applicant pool demographics (names redacted)
- Demographics of interviewed candidates (names redacted)
- Pre-interview candidate email
- Pre-screen prompt and rating matrix
- Interview questions and rating matrix

The College website and employee handbook publicize many measures to ensure an atmosphere of safety and belonging, including the following:

- Equal Education and Employment and Non-Discrimination Policy
- Non-Retaliation Policy
- Whistleblowers' Protection Policy
- Sexual Misconduct Policy/Title IX (discussed in depth below)
- The policy ensuring reasonable accommodations for employees with work limitations
- Grievance policies and procedures in bargaining agreements for full-time faculty (Article XLIV), adjunct faculty (Article XXX), administrators (Article VIII), support staff (Articles 24-25), and DSOEA (Articles II-III)

Employees' privacy rights are protected as well by the Public Records (FOIA) Policy (which is defined with procedures for use on HFC's Freedom of Information Act page), the General Data Protection Regulations Privacy Policy, and the Employment Personnel Files Policy (which ensures both accurate record-keeping and privacy).

A strong example of non-retaliation, non-discrimination, and transparency involves inquiries about equitable pay. As explained in the President's email to employees in May 2025, prompted by several bargaining units and the Black Employee Association, the College created a team to evaluate compensation for fairness and legality. That cross-constituency team was led by HR and included representatives from full-time faculty, administrators, support staff, and Cabinet. The one-year investigation revealed only three instances of inequitable compensation, which were rectified. To ensure ongoing pay equity, the College instituted principles and practices as well as an annual compensation review. (See report.)

The College also has a history of fairly resolving labor disputes. Most disputes are resolved informally. For those that cannot be addressed informally, the grievance process is followed; both sides strive for resolution at the lowest level possible within the College's administrative structure.

Tenure review provides a compelling example of collegial conflict resolution. In 2022, the HR team led a cross-functional committee in reviewing and revising the tenure review process for full-time, probationary faculty. Even though the committee did consult with both academic administrators and faculty, the final revision was later found to be in conflict with faculty duties as prescribed by the collective bargaining agreement. In December 2024, a grievance was filed (see email to membership). In response, the Executive Director of Human Resources met with representatives from the full-time faculty, academic administration, and HR to revise the process so that faculty concerns were addressed while adhering to the spirit of the tenure review process. The grievance was resolved amicably in April 2025 without escalating to the President or the Board of Trustees. The tenure portfolio counterproposal presented by the full-time faculty negotiators was accepted.

Student Conduct and Rights

Well-publicized student resources, policies, and practices create a fair, safe, and productive learning environment. They are reinforced by student orientation (see sub-criterion 3.D). Prospective and current students can access policies via HFC's public website and the student portal. The Student Handbook provides background on the college and its policies and procedures. The Student Policies, Rights, and Responsibilities page also leads students to important information about Title IX and optional training, discipline for conduct violations, the Student Code of Conduct Policy and Due Process Procedure, and the Student Complaint Policy and Procedure. Policies and practices are modeled after best practices from organizations such as the Association of Title IX Administrators and the National Association for Behavioral Intervention and Threat Assessment. A separate form exists to report accessibility complaints, as governed by the Support and Accessibility of Campus Programs and Facilities for People with Disabilities and the Electronic Information and Technology Accessibility policies.

The Student Complaint Policy and Procedures are followed closely, as demonstrated by the grade appeal process (see log of formal complaints). Students who are contesting assignment or course grades are encouraged first to seek resolution with the instructor. If no resolution is

reached, they may then begin the formal, written grade appeal process, wherein the complaint goes to the Associate Dean and Dean and may escalate to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. At each level, communication with the student and instructor enables fact finding for a fair verdict. The Vice President's decision is deemed final and is explained in writing to the student (see examples of grade appeal denial and approval). However, the student may request a formal hearing before a complaint board.

Several areas of the College collaborate to ensure access to online information. For example, the Information Technology Oversight Team (ITOT) consists of the Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs; Student Affairs; Financial, Facilities, IT, & Auxiliary Services; Marketing and Communications; and Strategy and Human Resources as well as the Directors for ITS—Applications and ITS—Network & Infrastructure. ITOT's duties include considering accessibility-related technology needs for employee training and compliance. Frequently, ITOT meetings involve guest speakers from other areas of the College, such as the Web Accessibility Manager and the Chair of the Instructional Technology Committee, who provide content-specific expertise. (For examples, see meeting minutes for December 2020 , items IV.a and IV.f; April 2021 , item IV.b; March 2022 , item IV.A; and October 2024 , item III.) The College commits resources to meet accessibility standards, including annual employee training (implemented in 2019) and provision of an extensive repository of background information and instruction on content delivered electronically. Department managers determine whether this training is relevant to their areas, are sent reminders, and are notified of employees who have not completed it. The Web Accessibility Manager reports annual completion rates for the Electronic Information Technology training to be 50-70% of all employees; because this statistic includes employees who did not need to do the training, it is misleadingly low.

Faculty and instructional technology staff have collaborated to ensure accessibility of online course materials for students. From 2022-2024, content delivered to students through the learning management system (LMS) was 89-90% accessible, aided by the accessibility software integrated into the LMS (see sub-criterion 3.D). Student complaints are very rare. HHS and BEPD reported no complaints. SoLA recorded only one case, in Fall 2024, in a class that was 50% online. The Associate Dean communicated with the instructor about accessibility's importance and where to find resources to ensure course materials are accessible; the student was given an incomplete grade and extra time to complete assignments. STEM documented 12 complaints. Three were determined to be unfounded. The remaining nine (one in Fall 2024 and eight between Winter 2020 and Summer 2022) were resolved by working with the publishing companies or by addressing internet connectivity problems. Where appropriate, students were either given opportunities to make up the affected coursework or issued tuition refunds.

Students' privacy is protected by FERPA-related policies and procedures:

- Access to Student Records (FERPA)
- Students Privacy and Access to Student Records under FERPA
- Procedure to Privacy and Access to Student Records under FERPA

Finally, the College respects students' religious diversity through the Academic Student

Religious Observance Policy , which was instituted in 2022. Through this policy, reasonable accommodations enable students to practice their religions without compromising their academic performance. The Vice President of Academic Affairs promotes this policy's implementation (see email).

Title IX

The College complies with Title IX practices that promote fairness, transparency, and ethical conduct. The publicly available Sexual Misconduct Policy , aligned with the 2020 Final Rule, informs students, faculty, and staff about their rights and responsibilities. A full-time Title IX Coordinator oversees all aspects of compliance, including policy enforcement, investigations, supportive measures, training, and ongoing evaluation. Reporting mechanisms are accessible online and in person, with secure case management to maintain confidentiality and federal compliance. The reporting process is supportive and educational. When the Title IX Office receives a report or complaint (formal or informal), it contacts those involved in the incident to perform a needs assessment, provide information on rights and options, and offer individualized support (including academic, workplace, and safety accommodations, such as no-contact orders or class changes). Education on the grievance procedures occurs during intake meetings and is reinforced in writing.

Training is central to HFC's Title IX efforts to promote institutional accountability and a safe, well-informed campus environment. While Title IX training for all employees is not federally required under the 2020 regulations, HFC does require all employees to complete annual training through a web-based program (see HFC Communications email). Specialized certification is required for investigators, decision-makers, and advisors to ensure impartial, trauma-informed case handling. Students receive Title IX education during orientation and through annual outreach efforts. From 2020 to Spring 2025, only three cases were filed. One was closed for insufficient information to proceed, one was resolved through respondent termination, and one was closed when the complainant declined to proceed to a formal hearing (see email documenting adherence to policy).

The College has improved Title IX training and documentation of completion rates. From academic year (AY) 2020-2021 to AY 2022-2023, the training was offered to all employees through the College's LMS, Moodle. Because Moodle lacked robust reporting features and the training was optional, completion was not tracked. In AY 2023-2024, training was delivered through Vector Solutions (Board Report 4663), which enabled completion tracking; however, the data set was imperfect because the system did not allow accurate exclusion of inactive employees. That system reported 52% completion; completion by active employees was likely closer to 80%. In AY 2024-2025, the College transitioned to a new system (NeoED) that can track only active employees. The current rate of Title IX training completion (92%) demonstrates dramatic improvement in policy compliance and reliable reporting.

HFC conducts annual policy reviews and biannual case audits to ensure Title IX compliance. Policy review involves the Title IX Office, Legal Counsel, the Office of Students Affairs, and Cabinet-level feedback. Final revisions are implemented by September and posted on the College website. Case audits occur in January and June and assess consistency in documentation,

supportive measures, timeliness, and adherence to procedures. Audit results guide training updates and procedural revisions.

The Title IX Office strives for continuous improvement. Feedback from faculty, students, Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) members, and conduct hearing officers has prompted, for example, procedural clarifications and creation of documentation templates.

Finances

Several mechanisms ensure ethical, effective financial management at the College. Board oversight stems from its Finance Committee (Bylaw 503), Audit Committee (Bylaw 501), and Audit Policy. Annual audits by an independent, certified accounting firm verify the College's adherence to generally accepted accounting principles and are presented to the Board at public Board meetings. See the 2024 Audit Report, 2024 Federal Awards Report, and 2024 Financial Report (prior years are also publicly available on the College's website).

At the operational level, the College has a standardized process for reviewing contracts. The Request for Contract Review forms capture parties involved in the vetting process (see, for example, the requests to contract with Procore Education Program and with Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation). The Budget Management Policy outlines the Board's, President's, and other Officers' roles in the judicious use of funds, ensures that budgetary information is publicly discussed and available, and establishes targets for financial reserves to enable the College to adapt to unexpected changes in the economy and demographics (see the example below). Also relevant are general purchasing and federally funded purchasing policies.

The President works closely with the Vice President - CFO and the Associate Director of Financial Research and Budgeting to advise the Board of Trustees. The Vice President and Associate Director monitor the annual budget. Throughout the month, they review current spending activities and trends in payroll projections through fiscal year end, fringe benefits, and tuition and fees. Weekly, they review and compare current cash flow activity and results with data from previous years. The President receives weekly updates on cash balances, tuition projections, and monthly year-to-date Income Statements. At its monthly meeting, the Board is updated on the above factors and on budget sustainability, which projects institutional revenue and expenses for the current and next two years. Mid-year budget adjustments are recommended to the Board, and College Reserve Projections are updated. See, for example, Board Reports 4737 and 4765.

The College's budget and procedures are flexible enough to handle unforeseen circumstances. The 2021 Financial Report (p. 20), for example, discusses the financial impact of COVID-19, and Board Reports 4583 and 4593 present COVID-related changes.

Stakeholders are consulted about financial allocations. Strategic and Operational Planning involves the entire College. See, for example, the creation of the Strategic Planning Task Force (Faculty Senate meeting minutes for September 8, 2021, VI.A and October 9, 2024, VI.B). Also, the Constitution for the Faculty Organization (sections III.A.3-III.A.7) states that full-time faculty share the responsibility for planning and financial decision making and oversight.

Criterion 4 further discusses the College's planning and finances.

Information Integrity and Security

Information security measures have improved through the College's infrastructure and training investments.

Infrastructure investments include upgraded firewalls (Board Reports 4560 and 4698), purchase of Virtual Desktop Infrastructure and professional implementation services (Reports 4631 , 4652 , and 4682), email security software (Reports 4626 and 4666), Disaster Recovery as a Service (Report 4585), renewal of the Cyber Security Incident Response Retainer program (Report 4719), and cybersecurity and training software (Report 4616). Email threat reduction software was

publicized to the entire College community in 2022 (HFC implements new Mimecast email threat reduction software).

The Data Integrity Oversight Team (DIOT) and the Information Technology Oversight Team (ITOT) collaborate to ensure that the College is working with accurate information. For example, to enable implementation of the Ellucian Experience Portal, bad or malformed data in the Colleague system had to be addressed. DIOT and ITOT coordinated data cleanup efforts.

Additionally, cybersecurity training has been ongoing since 2018. Initially, training occurred approximately twice a year. The College switched to a more robust cybersecurity training platform at the beginning of 2023. Since then, monthly training modules have been assigned to all employees and include topics such as password security, multifactor authentication, incident reporting, cybersafety, artificial intelligence, phishing, responsible social media use, and disinformation.

Administrators promote these trainings (e.g., the President's email). Completion rates hover around 85%. Additionally, anecdotal evidence proves the training's effectiveness. The Director of Network and IT Infrastructure reports getting emails confirming its helpfulness, and staff have shared suspicious emails with him to double check their legitimacy. Following training, IT periodically sends test emails or text messages; users who open suspicious files, click suspicious links, or respond to suspicious messages are notified and assigned additional training.

Legal Responsibility

The General Counsel/Vice President of Legal Services is responsible for all College-related legal issues, including compliance with regulations and statutes (Operations Policy on Compliance Lobbying and Supplanting of Funds and Other Federal and State Laws, Rules, and Regulations), risk management, and review and approval of contracts and policies (Contract Review Policy). Documents such as the Preservation of Documents Subject to Litigation Policy define the College community's role. The General Counsel/Vice President also collaborates with the Board of Trustees on five-year reviews and revisions of Board policies (see sub-criterion 2.C). See record of policy reviews and time table .

Health and Safety

Many Board policies strive to ensure the well-being of students, personnel, and other stakeholders.

Campus Safety

The Office of Campus Safety operates 24/7 to enforce policies, to monitor campus activity, to communicate incidents and other information to the College community, and to coordinate with external emergency contacts. It follows a detailed Emergency Operations Plan and is key to implementing the policy for reporting accidents and incidents . Its tools, well publicized on its website, include the following:

- HFC Alert! System and Reach Out app to communicate campus and weather emergencies
- Safe Walk, where students and employees may request Campus Safety personnel to escort them to their campus destinations
- Blue light emergency call boxes strategically placed around campus
- A user-friendly quick reference guide

The Office of Campus Safety complies with the Clery Act and prepares an annual, publicly available report. As shown in the Annual Security Report for the 2024-2025 Academic Year , this report is comprehensive, covering, for example, key policies and responsibilities, Campus Safety training, crime statistics (which reveal an exceptionally safe campus), and more. Critically important, together with Campus Safety, the College also educates the community about safe practices (see pp. 69-72 of the security report and a summary of Campus Safety training).

The College maintains and upgrades its security tools. See, for example, the following:

- Emergency response software (Board Report 4752)
- Security cameras (Reports 4565 , 4730 , and 4731 and Policy on Security Cameras on Henry Ford College Campuses)
- Patrol services (Report 4712)
- Critical Incident Mapping System (Report 4713)
- Emergency evacuation diagrams (Report 4725)

COVID-19 Response

Policies and procedures discussed above facilitated HFC's pandemic response, which protected employees' and students' health while preserving College operations, teaching and learning, and fiscal responsibility.

Following the Governor's Executive Order, the College closed its physical campuses in March 2020. Classes and other work were shifted online where possible. In May 2020, a cross-college team was created to develop plans for safely returning to campus; these plans aligned with State mandates and best practices from authorities such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Return to Campus Playbook was shared with employees in July 2020. Very limited return to campus began in July 2020. By Fall 2020, approximately 30% of classes had some in-person component. Board Report 4563 summarizes these steps, as does the President's message to employees on July 29, 2020 . In July 2021, phased-in return plans were developed by each department, with return to normal on-campus operations expected by January 2022. Safety

was maintained not only by limiting on-campus presence but also by instituting screening, masking, and social distancing policies, promoting vaccinations, and intensifying cleaning processes.

Throughout this period, the President updated the community through emails and public messages on the College website. See examples below (many communications to students were videos, not reproducible here):

- College finances and plan for moving forward, April 20, 2020
- Extension of Stay Home, Stay Safe Order and impact on HFC, April 24, 2020
- Return to Campus Team and five-day work week, May 14, 2020
- On-campus requirements and safety screening, July 1, 2020
- Return to campus update, July 29, 2020
- Fall 2020 updates, September 11, 2020
- Return to campus update, October 26, 2020
- State of Michigan Pause to Save Lives Order, November 16, 2020
- Information about COVID vaccine distribution, January 20, 2021
- Return to campus updates, May 13, 2021
- Return to campus, vaccine clinic and related updates, June 4, 2021
- Change in face mask guidelines, July 6, 2021
- Change in face mask policy on campus, August 16, 2021
- Vaccines or weekly COVID testing for employees, November 23, 2021
- What to expect for Winter 2022, December 10, 2021
- Winter 2022 hybrid-remote work update, December 17, 2021
- Change to on-campus COVID safety protocols, March 29, 2022
- Change in face mask policy, May 9, 2022

One of the major challenges of the pandemic was addressing positions whose work could not be continued online. The College tried to mitigate the negative economic effects on this group of employees. Initially, short-term campus closure was anticipated, and all employees were compensated through April 30, 2020 (Continuation of Stay Home Order and HFC Compensation). Unfortunately, the ongoing pandemic disruption made this approach unsustainable. As discussed in the President's message to employees on April 20, 2020 , layoffs began for staff who could not perform their jobs remotely. These layoffs were a last resort, after considering other cost-cutting options and use of CARES Act support .

2.B. Transparency

The institution presents itself accurately and completely to students and the public with respect to its educational programs and any claims it makes related to the educational experience.

Argument

As is evident from its mission, vision, and values , the College promises a holistic educational experience, where subject-specific learning is enriched by and dependent upon inclusion, adaptability, and service. This philosophy is clearly communicated to students and the public through the College website, social media, and other formats. The Division of Marketing and Communications oversees internal and external communications. Its procedures and resources advance an accurate portrayal of the College. Additionally, the Student Consumer Information page gathers institutional and policy information as well as graduation and transfer rates and other student success metrics.

Institutional Identity

While the College's home page effectively conveys HFC's welcoming, diverse learning environment, other, more specific information is accessible as well.

About HFC provides information about the College's leadership structure, contact information, strategic planning, scope of opportunities, and more. Claims made on that page link to evidence. For example, see the pages on diverse student body and campus life , promoting clubs, athletics, volunteerism, and cultural enrichment. HFC's commitment to inclusivity is emphasized on its welcome webpage and in a detailed welcoming statement from the Board of Trustees. Also posted on HFC's website, the Strategic Plan aligns with these values through its core focus on Advancing Belonging, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (ABIDE).

HFC is proud of its support of diverse student goals, most commonly degree or certificate completion, transfer to a four-year institution, or gainful employment. As discussed below and in criterion 3, transfer agreements, program requirements, and employment prospects are publicized in the online catalog and the Academics area of the College website and through other resources, such as Career Services .

HFC's commitment to being a student-centered institution is evident in information on the public Transparency Reporting webpage. For example, the annual budgets for fiscal years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 reveal that funding of instructional needs is second only to covering total personnel costs.

Accreditation

HFC's accreditation status is publicized on the [About HFC](#) page. In addition to identifying the Higher Learning Commission as the accrediting body and the period of accreditation, the [Institutional Accreditation](#) page enables users to verify the accreditation status and to access additional information, such as accreditation criteria and documentation.

Academic program accreditations are publicized, with their external accrediting bodies identified. Many academic and occupational programs meet regularly with advisory committees .

Enrollment and Registration

The College emphasizes access throughout its recruitment and enrollment processes, which align with the [Admissions Policy](#).

The home page invites prospective students to educate themselves about the College. Through the home page, students may explore certificate and degree programs, extracurricular activities, and HFC news stories that profile students, employees, and alumni, institutional advancements and resources, and more. Individual and group tours of the campus and the Culinary Arts facility may be scheduled. The [Apply Today](#) link addresses the needs of various student populations and offers additional contacts for more information.

As an open-access institution, HFC strives to be affordable. Affordability is communicated in many ways through the website. See examples below:

- There is no application fee.
- Cost of Attendance helps students budget beyond tuition and fees.
- Pay for Classes provides procedural information, key dates, and helpful contacts and options for financial aid.
- The page on affordability of tuition and fees includes a tuition calculator and information about the four-year tuition freeze guarantee .
- Financial Aid details eligibility requirements, key dates, and procedures, including the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy for maintaining aid.
- Scholarships are promoted with straightforward, efficient application steps.

Register for Classes not only provides detailed directions but also emphasizes creating personal academic plans and encourages students to consult with an advisor to make efficient progress

toward achieving their educational goals. Students can search for courses through the Course Catalog, which is linked to several pages, including the Student Portal , HFC Self-Service , and Academics . Students may also search the Program Catalog , where they can determine program-specific requirements and other information, such as transfer and career opportunities. See, for example, the Arab Cultural Studies and Criminal Justice—Law Enforcement associate degree programs.

Beginning in Fall 2025, by seamlessly integrating several systems, a new platform named Coursedog will ensure students' real-time access to up-to-date course and program information and scheduling options, which will facilitate planning and enrollment. (See Coursedog overview.) The College Catalog that will be generated and managed via Coursedog will link directly to the College website. Through links, students can easily navigate to many College webpages or contact Enrollment Services teams without exiting Coursedog (see 2025-2026 Catalog homepage).

College Website

The Division of Marketing and Communications works with the Web Team, the Accessibility Manager, and area experts to ensure appropriate, accurate, and accessible content. The process includes vetting new content prior to publishing, tagging content (for example, time-sensitive policies or regularly revised documents) to anticipate and incorporate periodic changes, and using a link-checking tool for internal and external content. Any content that is outdated or inaccurate and that cannot be updated is archived.

The College recently updated its website to be more student-centered, as the HFC mission mandates. Beginning in November 2023, to prepare users, updates from the Web Team were publicized. The first update described the rationale behind the overhaul and the work plan. The second update in December 2023 provided a progress report and plans to gather additional student and staff input. The third update in May 2024 announced the new website's launch, with assurances about ongoing improvements.

College Media

The College's website is not the only tool for communication and transparency. Additional media include the student newspaper (Mirror News), the campus radio station (WHFR , which broadcasts locally on 89.3 FM radio and worldwide on the web at WHFR.fm), and the College's YouTube channel , where recordings of Board of Trustees meetings, video messages from the President, and other information may be found.

2.C. Board Governance

In discharging its fiduciary duties, the institution's governing board is free from undue external influence and empowered to act in the best interests of the institution, including the students it serves.

Argument

Recognized as a member in good standing by the Association of Community College Trustees , HFC's Board of Trustees (which also acts as the Dearborn Public Schools' Board of Education) is accountable to the district established for the College: Dearborn and a small segment of Dearborn Heights. Its composition, compliance with State laws, and clear, thorough institutional bylaws, policies, and procedures ensure its objectivity and independence.

HFC complies with State law, including the Michigan Community College Act (CCA) of 1966 , which sets requirements for the governance, control, and administration of community colleges in Michigan (Board of Trustees Bylaw 0120—Powers and Philosophy). Per CCA Article 389.34, the Board of Trustees consists of seven members elected by the citizens of Dearborn (the main property tax base for the College and the public school district to which the College belongs). Elections for positions are staggered to ensure continuity of Board operations. Each Trustee resides in the district and serves a six-year term (Bylaw 0142.3). The Board elects from its members a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary (Bylaws 0152 and 0171). Occasionally, a Trustee resigns before the end of the term, in which case the Board promptly solicits applications and chooses a qualified replacement for the remainder of the term (see the August 2025 announcement).

Newly elected Trustees are oriented (see agenda). They may meet with the Board Chair, the College President, and others knowledgeable about Board and College policies and procedures (Bylaw 0142.7). The Board also has a site on Microsoft Teams that provides orientation materials.

The Board's authority over College operations is firmly established and consistent with Part 2 of the CCA. The Board is the ultimate decision maker about educational program and policy matters, acquisition, sale, and maintenance of buildings and other physical resources, and employment, as documented below:

- the Organizational Chart , which reveals a hierarchy culminating in the Board of Trustees
- the Board's Audit (Bylaw 501), Buildings and Grounds (Bylaw 502), Finance (Bylaw 503), and Policy (Bylaw 504) committees
- Bylaws 0132.2 (Administrative) and 0133 (Judicial)
- the Constitution for the Faculty Organization , which affirms the Board's ultimate authority (see, for example, Article III.A)
- the Board of Trustees' rights expressed in the full-time faculty bargaining agreement (Article II), adjunct faculty bargaining agreement (Article IV), HFC Administrators' Association bargaining agreement (Article III), Support Staff Association bargaining

agreement (Article IV), and Dearborn Schools Operating Engineers Association (DSOEA) bargaining agreement (Article XII).

Transparency bolsters the Board's accountability. The Board adheres to the Michigan Open Meetings Act , which invites community comment, the schedule of Board meetings is publicized (Bylaw 0165), and the Human Resources page links to the bargaining agreements between the Board and the bargaining units (AFT Local 1650—full-time faculty, AFT Local 337—Adjunct Faculty Organization, AFL-CIO Local 71—HFC Administrators' Association, the Support Staff Association, and the Dearborn Schools Operating Engineers Association). Furthermore, the Board of Trustees webpage links to its bylaws, policies, and procedures, to meeting agendas, minutes, and reports, and to Trustees' biographies. The Board complies with the Conflict of Interest, Conflicts of Commitment, Nepotism and Outside Activities Policy , affirming its impartiality.

The College follows the process described in Formulation of Henry Ford College Board Policies (which includes enforcement guidelines). Policies exist in an online repository and are on a five-year review cycle. A review date is set for each policy (see policy review record and list of policies left to review and update), and HFC's Office of Legal Services meets with the Board's Policy Committee (Bylaw 504) at scheduled public meetings to determine whether changes are needed. The Board Policy Committee gives reports at monthly Board meetings (e.g., minutes for January 2025, IV.B ; May 2024, V.C.6 ; and March 2024 , V.C.5 and VI.B). The Board of Trustees website documents the status of policies under review (see tabs on the HFC Policies, Procedures, and Bylaws webpage).

The President reports directly to the Board of Trustees, who ensure that he or she executes the office with integrity. The Board's expectations are articulated in several documents:

- Policy 1050 (President's Code of Conduct)
- Policy 1150 (Board-President Relationship)
- Policy 1200 (Employment of the President)
- Policy 1250 (Duties and Responsibilities of the President)
- Policy 1300 (Evaluation of the President) and Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes for May 20, 2024, VI.B
- Policy 1350 (Non-Reemployment of the President)

Because the Board's meeting minutes and reports reside on the College's website, the public may follow the Board's actions. As exemplified below, the Board is educated on the issues, ensuring responsible decision making.

- As reflected in the minutes for September 2021 , the format of Board meetings enables discussion among stakeholders before decisions are reached. In that meeting, several issues were discussed, including a personnel matter that benefited from input from the President of the Support Staff Association, an academic matter involving purchase of software to make the College's learning management system accessible to all users, and an update to the policy on academic integrity, which had already gone before the Board's

Policy Committee. The minutes explain that committee got input from the Chair of the Faculty Senate and the Vice President of Legal Services.

- The November 2022 minutes and reports capture discussion about whether to install an electric vehicle charging station prior to the vote for approval. Those same minutes contain a report from the Board Policy Committee.
- The March 2023 and April 2023 minutes illustrate the Board's deliberation over a proposed tuition adjustment.
- Deliberation over construction of the Southeast Michigan Student Success Center (SEMSSC) has been extensive. For example, the August 2024 minutes and Board Report 4751 reveal how the estimated total cost will be split among Bond proceeds, State Capital sources, funds from Wayne County, the College's annual millage, and College reserves. In October 2024, the public was notified about an upcoming Board Building and Site Committee meeting. Also, the request for proposals for a construction management firm and bid award process were clearly presented in Board Report 4759 (October 2024).
- The Trustees also often self-identify needs and interests when planning future meetings. For example, item VI.C in the minutes for January 2025 includes a request for SEMSSC background from a new Trustee and for information about collection of student demographic information and course demand, scheduling, and teaching modalities.

2.D. Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

The institution supports academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of knowledge as integral to high-quality teaching, learning and research.

Argument

Policies, practices, and activities within classes and beyond demonstrate the College's commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression.

Several documents create a strong philosophical foundation. The mission states, "We empower learners through the development of independent, critical and creative thinking, and we foster diversity, inclusion, understanding and acceptance..." The College's values include "exploring diverse perspectives and ideas," "honest dialogue," and "discovery, creativity, and innovation." Additionally, the Board of Trustees' commitment to making HFC a "welcoming college" vows to "continue to embrace the principles of First Amendment free speech, academic freedom, and free exchange of ideas and recognize the free association rights of faculty, staff, students, and their respective organizations." That statement aligns with the College's policy on intellectual freedom, which emphasizes freedom of expression as a human right and educational pillar and expresses the importance of balance when addressing controversial issues.

These protections enable position statements and discussions about sensitive topics. See, for example, the American Federation of Teachers' December 2023 press release, which was a joint statement from AFT leaders, including the President of the full-time faculty bargaining unit ("Academic freedom and fight against hatred and bigotry on campus go hand in hand"). Also see employee professional development events such as the Social Justice and Equity in Education Conference. Furthermore, academic freedom empowers committees such as the Council of World Cultures, which presented a program open to the entire HFC community on Freedom House Detroit, an organization that supports asylum seekers.

Several college-wide policies focus on creating a secure environment for open, responsible exchanges of ideas. For example, Use and Regulation of Campus Property for Expressive Activities defines areas for free expression that are visible but that will not disrupt College operations (see application process and examples of use). The Standards of Conduct and Civility Policy establishes behavioral norms. The Computer Systems Acceptable Use Policy extends protections to digital communication through College resources, emphasizing that the policy does not intend "to dampen or restrict freedom of inquiry or freedom of criticism."

Academic freedom in the classroom enables instructors to create engaging curriculum that helps students deepen their understanding of complex, often contentious topics. Pop culture and current events become gateways to critical thinking and application of course concepts (see, for example, English instructor Mike Hill's discussion of the academic environment at HFC).

Students' freedom of expression is similarly encouraged and protected. The Student Code of Conduct Due Process Procedure confirms that students have the same constitutional rights as other citizens and the same responsibilities, including not harassing, intimidating, or discriminating against others. The Student Complaint Policy provides a safe way to express dissatisfaction. The Student Council's purpose is to represent the students' best interests for consideration in planning and decision making by College personnel. Radio station WHFR 89.3 is independently run by HFC students and volunteers. The Student Newspaper Board Constitution protects newspaper board and staff rights under freedom of the press; additionally, the Student Newspaper Policy expressly states both the expectation for and the protection of open exchanges of ideas. The student newspaper has dealt responsibly with complex, potentially volatile events such as the Israel-Hamas conflict (see the staff editorial "Calling for Cease Fire in Gaza" and the article "Beyond borders: Exploring Detroit's Arab American and Jewish perspectives on the Israel-Hamas conflict").

Students' diverse views also find a home in existing Student Clubs and in opportunities to start new ones. Take, for example, the Faith and Reason Club, which "connects HFC students and the broader Dearborn community to facilitate intellectual and spiritual discovery and growth," and culturally based clubs, such as the African American Association, the Arab Student Union, the Latino and Hispanic Student Association, and the Muslim Student Association. Furthermore, students are encouraged to pursue their interests through research opportunities (see sub-criterion 3.B).

The College mission 's pledge "to prepare learners to succeed in a global society...and serve the public good" includes awareness of political issues and civic engagement. The College belongs to the Democracy Institute Consortium (see Democracy at HFC) and has hosted the Michigan Student Political Issues Convention , in which students from local colleges and universities gather to converse with political leaders and debate pressing political issues. The College has hosted other high-profile events as well, such as the National Student Issues Virtual Convention , the Women Leaders in Government Conference (open to the public), and a town hall featuring local state, media, and higher education speakers ("Future of Work: The Battle for Gen Z" town hall features luminaries and VIPs). Some students stand out for their engagement. For example, the Secretary of State selected an HFC Honors student to serve on the Michigan Department of State's Collegiate Student Advisory Task Force for the 2024 election cycle; that task force aimed to increase youth voter and civic engagement. Locally, HFC promoted a peaceful march raising awareness of the Juneteenth holiday . HFC also participates in an annual day of service commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Recently, HFC collaborated with University of Michigan—Dearborn to run a peace rally poster-making workshop , where students created posters and learned about the potential for this form of communication to promote justice.

2.E. Knowledge Acquisition, Discovery and Application

The institution adheres to policies and procedures that ensure responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.

Argument

Many policies and procedures promote the ethical acquisition and use of information by employees and students. (Also see Criterion 3 for further evidence of instruction on information literacy and research skills and of student and faculty scholarship.)

Several policies explain what constitutes responsible acquisition and use of information as well as the consequences of its misuse. These policies are publicly available on the College's policy webpage , in the Employee Handbook , and in the Student Handbook .

Proper handling of information is paramount, as the following policies show.

- The Standards of Conduct and Civility Policy is a direct extension of two of the College's primary values : integrity and respect. This policy states that "freedom of expression in scholarly pursuits and teaching activities...carries with it a responsibility to be accurate in speech and writing." The policy provides examples and directions for reporting transgressions.
- The Public Records (FOIA) Policy explains when information may be disclosed and how.

The Institutional Research and Business Intelligence Office focuses on providing accurate information that enables data-driven, responsible decisions and strategies college-wide. It submits many state and federal compliance reports, such as annual reporting for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Perkins Core Performance Indicators data, and the Michigan-specific Center for Educational Performance and Information. The IRBI section of the College website provides access to such data and to other data such as dashboards communicating the status of strategic plan priorities and Fast Facts about the College.

The College's Institutional Review Board (IRB) is responsible for reviewing and approving research involving human subjects and for addressing reported problems or violations. (See the IRB Research Application and list of projects .) It also specifies that student researchers must be supervised by faculty. HFC faculty, HFC institutional research and information technology experts, and an external research specialist comprise the IRB.

HFC promotes academic integrity through its teaching, policies, and procedures. The Academic Integrity Policy appears on the college's website, in the Student Handbook, and in all course syllabi. Students charged with academic dishonesty may appeal through the Student Complaint Policy and Due Process Procedure. Students receive ample, proactive instruction and support. For instance, the library's website contains library research guides ("Lib Guides"), including one that provides citation help, which is accessible from the library's home page and integrated into subject-specific Lib Guides (see, for example, the Writing Center, Computer Science, and History). (Also see sub-criterion 3.B.)

The Academic Integrity Policy has evolved with changes in technology and modes of instruction. Following the increase in online learning that began with the COVID shutdown, in September 2020, the Faculty Senate approved creation of a joint Senate-Administration Academic Integrity Task Force, which was charged with developing "recommendations on practice and policy for both faculty and administration in order to bolster the college's commitment to academic integrity" (September 2020 Faculty Senate meeting minutes, VI.B). That task force's recommendations included strengthening the policy's language (May 2021 Faculty Organization meeting minutes and task force report). The proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI) prompted another revision in 2024 (January 2024 Faculty Organization meeting minutes, Appendix A). These revisions provided students with additional information and examples of academic dishonesty, though the overall expectations and enforcement remained the same.

Some cases of limited academic dishonesty appear to be "teachable moments" that are handled by faculty informally, but other cases are documented and reported to the Registrar. Reports since the last HLC visit show that cases of academic dishonesty have declined:

- 2020-2021 – 89 academic dishonesty cases
- 2021-2022 - 73 academic dishonesty cases
- 2022-2023 - 63 academic dishonesty cases
- 2023-2024 - 59 academic dishonesty cases
- 2024-2025 – 43 academic dishonesty cases

The steady decline seems to be evidence that the policy is both well communicated and effective and that proactive educational efforts such as those described above and in sub-criterion 3.B are working.

Furthermore, the Faculty Senate created the Artificial Intelligence Task Force in September 2023 (see Senate minutes) and charged it with studying AI's implications for academic policy, training, resources, and support. The task force's report was presented to the Faculty Senate and distributed to all faculty in April 2024. Recognizing that AI's impact on the acquisition, creation, and use of knowledge will become more complex and pervasive in education, the Faculty Organization approved the creation of the Artificial Intelligence Standing Committee, which reports to the

Faculty Senate (May 2024 Faculty Organization meeting minutes). See the roster of standing committees for 2025-2026 (p. 4) for its charge and membership.

The Artificial Intelligence Standing Committee's first year was very productive, tackling many of the task force's recommendations. As explained in its report to the Faculty Senate in April 2025, the committee broke into subcommittees that researched technical and training needs as well as issues surrounding AI's effective, ethical use. A survey confirmed suspicions that faculty experience and comfort with AI varied significantly. The report concludes, "Faculty seek cross-group collaboration in AI decision-making, clearer guidelines, and targeted support for integrating AI responsibly into their teaching. These findings provide valuable insights for shaping institutional strategies and future professional development initiatives." The subcommittees made several recommendations, some focusing on policy and procedure and some on training and pedagogy, and the committee plans to further investigate feasible integration of AI technology collegewide.

The College is proud of its constructive, proactive response to the growth of AI in higher education and the workplace. The AI committee's work dovetails with work done by other committees, such as the Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation (CTEI) and the Instructional Technology Committee (ITC). For example, in Fall 2023, the CTEI and ITC hosted an on-campus mini conference on effective pedagogical uses of AI. An on-campus AI conference in September 2025 built on this training. Also, a frequently updated repository of AI-related resources is available to all faculty via the College's LMS. (Sub-criterion 3.C delves more deeply into relevant training and materials.)

Criterion 2 - Summary

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Argument

The College's commitment to ethical and responsible conduct is evident in its policies and practices and its accountability to the public. Through open meetings and online documentation, the Board of Trustees engages in transparent decision-making. Appropriate training, policies, and procedures ensure that privacy, health, and safety are protected. Documentation practices support fiscal responsibility and include publicizing budget, audit, and other financial reports and employee bargaining unit agreements. The College website provides information for informed decision making by students and their families. Furthermore, HFC's tradition of shared governance ensures consideration of stakeholders' needs and interests and fosters collegiality. Academic policies are communicated to students through the College website, the Student Handbook, and course syllabi. Responsible, ethical use of information accompanies freedom of expression and academic freedom.

3 - Teaching and Learning for Student Success

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

3.A. Educational Programs

The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.

Argument

At the program and course levels, HFC fulfills its mission to provide an outstanding education that aligns with its students' diverse higher-education goals.

Curriculum Development, Rigor, and Consistency

In collaboration with Administration, faculty drive the development of all course and program learning outcomes and content to ensure appropriate rigor and alignment with industry and transfer needs. The importance of faculty expertise is articulated in the Constitution for the Faculty Organization.

The Curriculum Management Handbook documents the process for course and program development. The Curriculum and Development Approval flowchart captures an organic process, originating at the department level and then proceeding through various stakeholder groups with additional expertise, checks, and balances. Faculty retain primary responsibility for content throughout the process (see the Curriculum Committee Charge and Bylaws and Instructional Leadership Team Review and Approval Process). New-program development is guided by questions that evaluate its quality and viability (see Program Proposal Checklist and Guiding Questions). Of particular note for sub-criterion 3.A are the questions related to transferability and competition with other colleges in the region. Curriculum Committee minutes for November 4, 2024, exemplify the committee's close oversight and attention to detail and its collaboration with other areas of the College.

The College has just transitioned to a new platform (Coursedog) to coordinate curriculum development, management, and scheduling as well as assessment of student learning (see sub-criterion 4.C and a March 26, 2025, email from the Vice President of Academic Affairs). Among other tasks, this system will facilitate and track new program and course proposals. In May 2025, user testing of two components began: curriculum proposals and scheduling proposals (see Curriculum Committee Chair's email and User Acceptance Training checklist). Coursedog went live in Fall 2025; end-user training is planned.

Coursedog retains the integrity and rigor of curriculum and program development while making the process more transparent and efficient. See examples of forms below:

- New course proposal
- New program proposal
- Course revisions proposal
- Program revisions proposal
- Course deactivation proposal
- Program deactivation proposal

Scaffolding of learning outcomes supports the learning process. As explained in the handbook published by the Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning (CASL), students' mastery of learning outcomes is categorized as introductory (I), developing (D), and competent (C), with benchmarks defined by faculty experts "based on expected work or academic standards of achievement in [the] industry or discipline" (p. 6). IDC mapping for programs illustrates expected student growth as they proceed through the curriculum (see, for example, degree maps for the Social Work and Counseling, Biology, Graphic Design, Computer Information Systems, and Surgical Technologist programs). Furthermore, the Curriculum Management Handbook, the CASL Handbook, and the Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation support faculty in creating clear, appropriate learning outcomes, covering topics such as Bloom's Taxonomy and alignment of learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and assessments.

Additionally, the College's academic requirements align with the type of credential. Degree types and requirements are publicized on the College website and reflect distinct levels of learning for certificate, associate degree, and bachelor's degree programs. The associate and bachelor's degree requirements specify that developmental courses do not count toward graduation; only college-level courses do. A synopsis of the College's laddered programs also defines levels of learning.

Adherence to course masters leads to consistent quality and rigor regardless of instructor, location, or mode of class delivery. Course masters contain mandatory, measurable learning objectives, pre- and co-requisite information, and acceptable assessment methods applicable to all classes. For example, see the course masters for Introduction to Biology, Computers in Healthcare, and Small Business Management and Entrepreneurship. At least every five years (most recently in AY 2024-2025), course masters undergo a formal review and are updated as necessary. (Note: the College will refer to course and program "records" rather than "masters" in Coursedog to avoid offensive terminology.)

While maintaining consistent rigor and objectives, HFC also addresses students' diverse learning needs and goals. The English Department supports under-prepared students and English Language Learners by offering both traditional and co-requisite versions of English 131 (Introduction to College Writing). The learning outcomes for English 131A (for under-prepared students) and English 131E (for English Language Learners) are the same as English 131's, but extra support is provided in a co-requisite course. Also, ENG-131E instructors must have special credentials. For high-achieving students in the Henry Ford II Honors Program, English 131H's curriculum expands on the baseline learning objectives as English 131 by aligning coursework with the accompanying Honors Colloquium and requiring more challenging assignments.

State legislation passed in the past few years seeks to increase the number of degree or certificate holders to 60% of working-age adults by 2030 (Michigan's so-called "60 by 30" goal). That has meant rethinking how to support under-prepared students to move them more quickly into college-level classes. Beginning in 2022 in connection with the Michigan Reconnect program, State funding mandates required the College to discontinue all non-co-requisite developmental English and Math classes because they would no longer be funded. Both English and Math worked quickly but responsibly to connect their gateway courses to co-requisites that would provide extra support; partly, that involved scaling up the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) curriculum already used. The co-requisite classes appear below. Each has the same instructor and cohort of students.

- ENG-131A & ENG-094
- ENG-131E & ENG-095E
- MATH-110 & MATH-010
- MATH-131 & MATH-031
- MATH-141 & MATH-041

While the co-requisite approach satisfies the majority of under-prepared students, both English and Math recognized the need to serve the minority as well. A new course titled ENG-090A: Academic Literacies was created to be a co-requisite of the Social Sciences or Humanities Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA) courses, many of which had stated developmental reading and writing eligibility as a prerequisite. Math took a different approach and in Fall 2022 created a Math Coach position to provide additional support.

Adjustments at the course level also seek to make students' educational journeys as efficient as possible. For example, ELL-130 (Academic Writing and Reading for the English Language Learner) is a new course that may expedite students' transition from the English Language Institute (ELI) courses to English 131 and other college courses. ELL-130 is a single, four-credit-hour course that replaces a co-requisite approach that required students to take two courses, each three credit hours. (See the ELL-130 proposal, which was accepted.) Additionally, ELI students may opt to write "challenge essays" to determine whether they can enroll directly in English or enroll in ENG-095E and ENG-131E rather than continuing with the ELL curriculum before making the transition (see presentation on ALP challenge essay).

HFC's diverse course modalities accommodate students' needs and preferences while maintaining curriculum consistency. Prior to COVID, HFC ran 100% asynchronous online, hybrid, hyflex, and 100% on-campus classes. When COVID necessitated remote learning for an extended period, the College added another modality: "Live Without the Drive." In this format, classes meet at specific times via conferencing software such as Zoom or Teams, approximating the on-campus class experience. Adherence to course masters assures identical learning outcomes for all classes, regardless of modality. While teaching strategies differ, the learning objectives and quality do not.

The College strived to maintain course consistency and quality even when faced with the sudden, unprecedented disruption by the pandemic. The COVID shutdown in March 2020 forced the

majority of classes online. Classes (such as Health Careers labs, Welding, Automotive, and Culinary Arts) that could not achieve their learning objectives in an online format were suspended and completed in July 2020, during the first phase of HFC's return to campus plan (see the Return to Campus Playbook). Recognizing that some students may not be able to persist under these conditions, the policy for giving incompletes was also temporarily relaxed:

Amendment of Policy on Incomplete Grades Extension: A student performing satisfactorily upon completion of 75% of course work may initiate and be automatically granted an Incomplete (I) grade. Departments and course leaders appointed by departments may define satisfactory performance in a course. Departments may decide when to offer the chance to finish the Incomplete. The expiry date of an "I" grade in Winter 2020 and Fall 2020 can be set as late as the Grade Due Day of the 2021 Fall semester, at the department's or instructor's discretion. All other aspects of incomplete grades remain unchanged. (November 2020 Minutes of the Faculty Organization)

When the COVID disruption persisted much longer than anticipated, this policy was amended again in 2021:

Incomplete Policy Extension: A student performing satisfactorily upon completion of 75% of course work may initiate and be automatically granted an Incomplete (I) grade. Departments and course leaders appointed by department may define satisfactory performance in a course. Departments may decide when to offer the chance to finish the Incomplete. The expiration date of an "I" grade in Winter 2020, Fall 2020, and Winter 2021 can be set as late as the Grade Due Date of the 2021 Fall semester, at the department's or instructor's discretion. All other aspects of incomplete grades remain unchanged. (February 2021 Minutes of the Faculty Organization)

In its final report in 2019, the HLC review team expressed concern over insufficient evidence of oversight and consistency across sections for each course. HFC has addressed this concern by purchasing and mandating the use of Concourse software for electronic syllabi (see Board Report 4581, the Interim Monitoring Report (pp. 5-7) submitted by HFC in 2021, and HLC's response (pp. 4-5)). Concourse not only acts as a central repository for syllabi, facilitating oversight, but also automatically populates syllabi with information, including learning outcomes, from the most current course masters. See the Concourse template for one department and examples from the following class sections and modalities: ENG-131-21 (hybrid), MATH-180-01 (100% on campus), CIS-125-08 (hyflex), BIO-234-03 (LWD), and MGT-230-97 (100% asynchronous online). In the Winter 2025 semester, HFC documented 97% compliance with this policy. Academic consistency is also reinforced by the requirement for all faculty to use the College's Learning Management System, regardless of mode of class delivery (see the recently updated LMS usage policy).

Articulation Agreements and Partnerships

Transfer agreements with four-year colleges and universities attest to HFC's rigor.

- The Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA) assures transferability of general education courses between participating institutions. The college-level rigor of HFC's general education courses is reflected in the HFC MTA Agreement.

- Articulation agreements with many colleges and universities enable students to complete at least half of their bachelor's degree requirements at HFC.
- Reverse Transfer Agreements with many universities in Michigan enable students to earn an associate degree even after they have transferred.
- Transfer Bridges to the Humanities @ University of Michigan caters to students who are interested in the humanities and humanistic social sciences and enables them to complete their first two years at HFC.
- Learn4ward consists of seamless transfer agreements with guaranteed admission to University of Michigan—Dearborn, Wayne State University, Eastern Michigan University, and Davenport University Online. In addition to facilitating course transfer, it enables students to complete both an associate degree and a bachelor's degree in 4-6 years.
- MiTransfer Pathways agreements build on the MTA and facilitate program-specific course transfer.
- Michigan Reconnect is a statewide scholarship program that covers in-district tuition and mandatory fees for Michigan residents who are at least 25 years old, lack a college degree, and pursue a Pell-eligible skill certificate or associate degree. It does not affect the admissions requirements or rigor of the programs themselves.

Students may also apply to receive college credit for prior learning. Faculty determine which courses are eligible and the assessment measures, following a formal procedure that has been approved by other groups, such as the Curriculum Committee. The Credit for Prior College-Level Learning policy stipulates that “[i]f program admission, accreditation or licensure issues preclude credit for prior college-level learning, credit will not be awarded for that program.”

HFC continues to provide many opportunities for high school students to take college courses and/or to accelerate achievement of their high school and college degrees. The rigor and learning objectives of the college-level classes are ensured partly by imposing the same course placement requirements as for other students. The Interim Report (p. 12) submitted to HLC in 2021 also clarifies that high school students are integrated into standard college classes alongside traditional and returning adult students, assuring consistency in learning objectives and college-level standards. Several pathways exist for high school students.

- Through Dual Enrollment, students can enroll in college courses independent of their high school curriculum. The public school system pays their tuition.
- Advancement Plus is similar to Dual Enrollment but is funded by students and their parents.
- Henry Ford Collegiate Academy allows Dearborn Public Schools students to earn a high school diploma and an associate degree in just five years, at no cost to students or their parents.
- Henry Ford Early College (HFEC) is available to Wayne County high school students and enables them to earn a high school diploma, professional certification or associate degree, and college course credits in just five years. Three pathways exist: Health, Advanced Manufacturing, and Pre-Education.
- Henry Ford Middle College Trade School offers high school students the opportunity to take introductory courses and earn certificates in a variety of high-wage, technical fields.
- Partnerships between HFC and high schools enable students who have completed Career and Technical Education programs at a high school to apply for free college credit. The application process and terms of agreement ensure that any credit awarded

- is appropriate for HFC's college-level curriculum.
- Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate set high standards for granting college credit, and transcript evaluation for international high schools and colleges is rigorous.

Program Admissions Requirements and Accreditation

As with course curriculum, faculty drive program development. Program masters specify program learning outcomes, course sequences, transfer agreements, and other key information to ensure college-level, discipline-appropriate learning. See, for example, the program masters for AB in Accounting, AAS in Computer Information Systems--Cybersecurity, AA in Journalism, AS in Pre-Engineering, and BS in Culinary Arts. Some programs, such as those in Nursing and Health Careers, have special admissions criteria. For example, the Nursing Department offers two degrees with related but distinct learning outcomes. The AS in Pre-Nursing prepares students to apply to the Nursing Program. It has no special prerequisites. However, as a more specialized degree, the AAS in Nursing Program identifies rigorous application requirements. Several other programs also require pre-admission coursework, including Physical Therapist Assistant, Radiographer, Respiratory Therapist, and Surgical Technologist. Pre-program coursework is transferable and meets MTA requirements for students who choose to pursue a bachelor's degree in the discipline. Notably, HHS is currently evaluating the effectiveness of pre-program pathways and determining whether changes are needed. Program accreditations by external authorities and transfer agreements prove appropriate academic rigor.

Sub-criteria 3.E and 3.F provide detailed discussion of periodic review processes that ensure up-to-date, relevant curriculum.

Advisory Committees

Advisory Committees help to ensure appropriate content and rigor in occupationally oriented programs. These committees typically meet twice a year and provide advice on curriculum, help to identify training sites and place students, and advocate for programs in the community and political spheres. (See advisory committee rosters and examples of meeting minutes.)

3.B. Exercise of Intellectual Inquiry

The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

Argument

Sub-criterion 3.B aligns with the College's mission to "empower learners through the development of independent, critical and creative thinking" and "prepare learners to succeed in a global society" and with its Critical Thinking and Information Literacy Institutional Learning Outcome (ILO) (see assessment handbook, p. 8). These skills are vigorously pursued and assessed through curricular and co-curricular programs and activities (see sub-criterion 3.E).

Academic Courses and Programs

At both the program and the course levels, students learn and apply skills associated with intellectual inquiry, including ethics.

Because composition courses are requirements for all degree programs, they ensure foundational skills college-wide. This is reflected in the learning outcomes and requirements.

Two of the course topics in English 131: Introduction to College Writing are particularly relevant:

- Think critically by comparing and evaluating diverse viewpoints on a variety of topics and reaching conclusions based on available evidence and logic.
- Use information by effectively integrating and synthesizing information from other sources into their writing.

Essays that analyze and respond to assigned readings are common. Additionally, the course introduces skills for finding, evaluating, and citing sources, establishing a foundation for the next course in the sequence (English 132 or English 135), which is heavily focused on research.

English 132: College Writing and Research takes these skills to the next level:

- Think critically: compare and evaluate diverse viewpoints on a variety of topics and reach conclusions based on researched information and evidence.
- Use information: utilize research strategies to identify and locate appropriate college-level sources and successfully integrate them into the student's own written work.

English 135: Business and Technical Writing and Research parallels English 132 but in the context of professional communication. In addition to teaching research-related skills, English 135 analyzes how genre, formatting, and other strategies adapt writing to varied audiences and purposes.

Other classes, some General Education and some program-specific, further those skills. See, for

example, the Critical Thinking and Information Literacy Focus ILO Report from May 2024, in which all four Schools are represented (Business, Entrepreneurship, and Professional Development; Health and Human Services; School of Liberal Arts; and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). See examples from each:

- CIS 296: Information Assurance Methodology
- RTH-250: Advanced Mechanical Ventilation ; RTH-285: Advanced Respiratory Concepts
- TCM-131: Introduction to Telecommunication ; TCM-241: Media Writing
- MATH-180: Calculus I

The Henry Ford II Honors Program requires a Directed Study, which pursues more focused, in-depth intellectual inquiry; students may opt to complete additional directed studies in future semesters. Targeting sophomore students, the Directed Study's goal is "to deepen students' interests in topics while strengthening their research and oral presentation skills as a way of preparing them for continued studies at transfer institutions." Additional options are Honors Directed Study Abroad and Honors Directed Study—Service Learning. To conclude, students present results to the College community. See the Honors research projects listed by semester. The Honors Collaboration Lounge (Board Report 4613) fosters a scholarly environment.

Non-Honors students may also pursue their interests through Directed Study (see Theater and Telecommunication). For example, in 2024, three Theater students focused on dramaturgy, researching demographic changes, housing laws, and race relations in Detroit during the 20th and early 21st century. After collecting and analyzing information from news archives, books, interviews, and recorded materials in the Detroit Historical Society archives, the students created "production packets" to be used as guides for actors and production designers and for the script for HFC's play "The Detroit Wall Project." For their stellar work, they were awarded a Certificate of Merit for Excellence in Dramaturgy from the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. Telecommunication Directed Study projects focused on producing short videos for skills enhancement and on creating samples of original short and feature-length commercial scripts and writing for public service.

Many programs have capstone or experiential learning courses where students apply skills that are essential to intellectual development and adaptability. Examples follow:

- BLDA-280: Building Science Capstone
- SWK-290: Social Work Practicum
- LGL-295: Paralegal Internship
- HOSP-290: Co-op in Hospitality
- OPT-293: Clinical Externship II

Students have also excelled in the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) through the University of Michigan—Ann Arbor. These summer projects immerse students in modes of academic research and encourage them to form close relationships with mentors. Several students participate annually (2020, seven students; 2021, seven; 2022, six; 2023, ten; 2024, eight; 2025, seven). Two from the Summer 2024 cohort (see research abstracts for Ali Berry and Manar Mawri) were awarded the Blue Ribbon of Excellence for their presentations at the UROP

Summer Research Symposium.

Until April 2025, when the National Institutes of Health lost its funding and the program was discontinued, the Institutional Research and Academic Career Development (IRACDA) program was another partnership between HFC and the University of Michigan—Ann Arbor. IRACDA helped to fund student research supplies at HFC, an annual university transfer symposium, and research opportunities for students (see the 2025 Local Strategic Value Resolution, p. 8).

Academic Support

Eshleman Library and the Writing Center are invaluable for students' intellectual development.

Eshleman Library provides not only student access to sources of information but also instructor support and explicit instruction in research strategies, source evaluation, and source documentation. Additionally, many faculty have the librarians orient their classes to physical and online resources and instruction on their use. The librarians also help faculty design effective research-oriented assignments. (See Library Resources for Faculty and Staff.) Library research guides (“LibGuides”) have been developed for specific courses and subjects. See, for example, the LibGuide for English 131 (Introduction to College Writing). Note especially the section on evaluating sources, which includes a chart that helps students evaluate source quality and usefulness.

The Writing Center emphasizes writing as an act of intellectual inquiry, communication, and adaptability. Its homepage describes it as “collaborative and relational space where writers, readers, and texts can coexist...Respondents in the Writing Center work with writers to help them develop a fuller understanding of the academic, social, and cultural effects of writing.” It has also strived to address the loss of developmental reading courses at HFC in the past few years, framing its work more broadly in terms of academic literacy (see the 2023-2024 annual report). Furthermore, the Writing Center supports instructors in designing and integrating writing assignments across the curriculum (see Writing Across the Curriculum flyer and Winter 2025 communication).

Co-curricular and Extracurricular Activities

Co-curricular and extracurricular activities are vital to students' intellectual growth and adaptability.

For example, a student group researching black holes with an HFC Physics and Astronomy instructor is using cutting edge technology after being awarded a \$20,000 grant to work with data from the new, state-of-the art Legacy Survey of Space and Time (LSST) Telescope in Chile. As one of the lead groups to work with this data, these HFC student-researchers will complete several technical and professional workshops and “write a student-friendly guide for working with data from the LSST with the hopes of making similar astronomy research opportunities available to community college students all over the nation.” This same student group published an article with their instructor in *The Astrophysical Journal* (“Dead Stars Society’ publishes article in prestigious academic journal”).

Such faculty-student collaboration extends to other events, too. For instance, in April 2025, two faculty accompanied several Honors students to the Mid-East Honors Association Conference; as panelists, these students discussed their student experiences as Black women “through a lens of critical autoethnography and critical storytelling” (see conference program, p. 16, and the research they cited).

Additional examples include a team of pre-engineering students that was one of twelve finalists in the 2024 Community College Innovation Challenge for designing an app to detect misinformation online, a Henry Ford Early College student who developed MindLift, an app to support mental health, and the competitive success of the Mathematics Club.

Through partnerships with area universities, HFC provides many opportunities for students to develop as researchers, often through summer research positions (for example, the informational symposium in 2025). Other summer programs promoted by the College stress interdisciplinary exploration and intellectual development, including building leadership skills and social and cultural awareness (Summer study programs (paid) that can change your life!).

Students can exercise and enrich their intellectual skills and creativity through HFC’s Arts and Culture programming (see Campus Life).

- Accessible online and in print, The Mirror News is a monthly newspaper that is created and produced entirely by students. It features both articles and artistic work. A snapshot of the homepage illustrates its range and alignment with the HFC community. Its excellence is documented by many awards, including 10 awards in 2025 and 15 awards in 2023-2024 at the Michigan Press Association’s MPA Better Newspaper Conference as well as 25 awards in 2020, 7 awards in 2021, 18 awards in 2022, 25 awards in 2023, and 29 awards in 2024 at the Michigan Community College Press Association (MCCPA) newspaper contest.
- At the annual Liberal Arts Network for Development (LAND) Conference, students regularly present research, frequently winning awards.
- Creative writers and artists may submit their work to the annual student publication Through Our Looking Glass and participate in the annual Barrett Creative Writing Contest. In the Central Division for the national Community College Humanities Association literary magazine contest, *Looking Glass* took 1st place in 2020 and 2024 and 3rd place in 2021.
- A rarity among community colleges, HFC has a long-running radio station, WHFR.FM, that gives students hands-on experience in broadcast communications while also serving the Dearborn community with news and entertainment. It broadcasts 24/7 under an FM broadcast license issued by the Federal Communications Commission.
- Open to the public, the recently renovated Sisson Art Gallery features both student and professional works. In “Exit Exhibitions,” graduating students also exhibit their art. See exhibits for 2024-2025.
- HFC’s music and theater productions have long been a source of pride.

Many formalized student activities also foster intellectual growth. The Student Council is one example. Among its duties is advocating for students on important, college-wide issues, and it pursues its own initiatives (see list of accomplishments). Student clubs enable exploration of personal interests and growth of leadership skills. As the student clubs policy manual explains, while each club has a faculty or staff advisor, the clubs are student-run and held to high standards of responsibility, including managing budgets and fundraising, creating and updating their constitutions, submitting regular activity reports, and promoting their events.

3.C. Sufficiency of Faculty and Staff

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

Argument

Sufficiency of staff is well documented and integral to student success.

Staffing

HFC Fast Facts provides annual staff and student demographics (2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025). In 2024-2025, of the 846 employees, 174 were full-time faculty, and 324 were adjunct faculty. Notably, the full-time faculty bargaining agreement (Article IV.B) contains new language that ties the number of full-time faculty positions to student enrollment and state aid levels. Academic support is also provided by staff and administrators from many areas, including Academic Advising, Counseling, and Financial Aid. See the organizational chart.

Area expertise is assured by the hiring and probationary processes and by ongoing performance evaluation and professional development. HFC's Job Description Policy explains how criteria are created and maintained. This policy is reinforced by the agreements of the various bargaining units.

In addition to performing area-specific duties, employees support the overall mission of the College. Human Resources introduces new employees to the institution's culture via its welcome and onboarding portals.

Faculty Credentials, Probation, and Ongoing Evaluation

All faculty members are thoroughly vetted and qualified.

Faculty Credentials

In 2019, HLC's review team expressed concern over documentation of faculty credentials. In response, the College reevaluated and improved its process. (See the interim monitoring report, pp. 9-12.) Baseline credentials are now specified in every course master. See, for example, ENGT-265: Mechanical Capstone Project, ARA-232: Intermediate Arabic II, LGL-126: Legal Research, SOC-151: Contemporary Social Issues, and Tael-145: DC and AC Motors. This sampling demonstrates a careful credential verification process for all disciplines. So does the following documentation:

- Adjunct Hiring Guide for HFC Managers
 - Academic Relatedness Review Form
 - Academic Relatedness Review Form—Adjunct PAF

Program Review (sub-criterion 3.F) also ensures that instructors have credentials mandated by external accrediting bodies. Both full-time and adjunct instructors must have the required credentials to teach a class. See the following sample credential packets:

- For an adjunct instructor to teach Medical Terminology
- For an adjunct instructor to teach Introduction to the Humanities
- For a full-time instructor to teach Automotive Technology
- For a full-time instructor to teach Mathematics

As documented in the interim monitoring report, 100% faculty compliance was achieved in Winter 2021. Monitoring ensures continued compliance (see the record of faculty credentials by course in Winter 2025).

Full-Time Faculty Probation and Evaluation

In order to achieve tenure, new full-time faculty are evaluated through a rigorous yet supportive four-year probationary process. The goal is to ensure not only excellent teaching and student support but also collaboration skills and commitment to the College's mission, vision, and values.

The four-year tenure and probation process is defined in the bargaining agreement (Article VI) and focuses primarily on professional duties specific to the position in the first 2½ years and then expands to include participation in shared governance. This process mandates class observations (or the equivalent for non-teaching full-time faculty) and reports by the appropriate Administrator several times per year. Administrators provide constructive feedback for the teachers' development and success. New teachers are assigned peer mentors in their areas, who orient them to the curriculum and College operations, share materials, advise on shared governance and professional development, and provide moral support in a confidential environment. Furthermore, the Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation (CTEI) runs a mandatory orientation program for full-time faculty: HFC 101. Probationary faculty also create portfolios, a process facilitated by Human Resources (see Tenure Process Resource Guide). This portfolio requirement was approved in 2021, piloted beginning in January 2022, and revised in 2025 to be more efficient and to align with contractual duties of full-time faculty (see the tenure portfolio counterproposal accepted by HR).

Tenured faculty held to high standards (see Articles XIX and XXXI of the full-time faculty bargaining agreement). Full-time faculty are evaluated by students every semester and complete a self-evaluation every two years that documents their accomplishments, professional development, and participation in shared governance. Peer Mentor Committees receive the results of student evaluations and self-evaluations and intervene if poor performance is indicated. Article XXXI.B reveals the conditions and goals of such interventions and when Administration may become involved.

Adjunct Faculty Probation and Evaluation

Adjunct faculty also have well-defined probation and evaluation processes.

Article XII of the Adjunct Faculty Organization bargaining agreement defines the probationary period that must be completed before being promoted to Senior Adjunct status. Article XVI states, “College Administration may observe and evaluate the performance of Employees. Prior to attaining Senior Adjunct status under Article XII, probationary Employees will be observed and evaluated at least two times ... to afford Employees with timely feedback and opportunity to improve.” College Administration evaluates probationary faculty’s classroom performance and execution of other professional responsibilities (Article VII) prior to granting Senior Adjunct status. Under-performing faculty may be assigned a Performance Improvement/Action Plan, “against which the Employee’s performance shall be regularly evaluated.” Inadequate progress may result in disciplinary action or termination.

Senior Adjuncts may also mentor probationary faculty, after completing a four-hour training program (see program description and mentor-mentee guidelines). Furthermore, the CTEI offers an optional HFC orientation program for adjunct instructors, HFC 101A.

Every semester, students evaluate adjunct faculty through a process facilitated by the Institutional Research department (see the evaluation form).

Faculty Professional Development

Faculty pursue a variety of professional development activities to ensure pedagogical currency and effectiveness.

Financial Support

The bargaining agreements of both adjunct faculty and full-time faculty outline the College’s support. Adjunct faculty (Article XVII) are compensated for participating in training and professional development, purchasing publications and professional memberships, and attaining or maintaining necessary certifications. Full-time faculty (Article XXX) may use the Travel and Conference Fund, professional conference days, and tuition reimbursement (which faculty often use to pursue advanced degrees). The Professional Improvement Fund reimburses full-time faculty for membership dues, professional publications, software and hardware, and other resources to support teaching. See conference attendance (which includes not only faculty but also staff and administrators) and Professional Improvement Fund use.

Venues

Faculty pursue in-house and external professional development.

Full-time faculty are required and adjunct faculty are encouraged to attend an annual Professional Issues Conference (PIC), whose focus is determined by an HFC committee open to all faculty and staff. This conference is a joint venture between the full-time faculty bargaining unit and the College Administration. The titles below reveal the breadth of this training and its adaptation to HFC’s needs.

- 2020: A Day of Self-Care (speaker on Mindfulness, Ann Brand)
- 2021: Inclusive Teaching During Uncertain Times (Dr. Michelle Pacansky-Brock)
- 2022: Inclusive and Equitable Teaching at HFC (speakers: Dr. Jamiella Brooks, Decolonizing the Classroom; Dr. Bryan Dewsbury, Equity 101; Dr. Diane Goodman, Unconscious Bias and Microaggressions)
- 2023: Where Are We Now? An Assessment on Mental Health (pre-conference survey of HFC students provided context for presentations from speakers from Active Minds, a non-profit organization focusing mental health for youth and young adults)
- 2024: Art and Wellness, “A PIC Me Up” (workshops led by HFC instructors)
- 2025: Metacognition: Teaching and Learning (speakers Dr. Kelly Hogan and Dr. Viji Sathy; breakout sessions on student engagement, humanizing the syllabus, metacognition and artificial intelligence (AI), and burnout)

The Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation (CTEI) provides internal professional development and training. Full-time faculty act as Co-Directors, who are supported by the Advisory Board consisting of full-time and adjunct faculty. According to its charge, the CTEI “[p]rovides research-based and emerging resources and activities for faculty professional development and encourages innovation to advance teaching and learning excellence.” Its events leverage the expertise of HFC faculty, staff, and administrators and provide access to or partner with external resources. See, for example, the programs for 2022-2024 and Winter 2025. Wide-ranging topics include technology-related pedagogy, assessment, student engagement and mental health, and more. In addition to facilitating sessions, the CTEI maintains a repository of articles, websites, videos, and other content. CTEI reports for 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 provide additional information. The Co-Directors remain current on pedagogical practices partly by attending national conferences, such as the Teaching Professor and Lily conferences.

Students require many modes of instruction (see data). This diversity requires specialized teacher training, which is provided through the CTEI and HFC’s Instructional Technology department and supported by the LMS Training Timeline Policy passed by the Faculty Organization in January 2022 (see meeting minutes).

The Office of Academic Affairs documents which instructors have participated in Moodle (LMS) training and Preparing to Teach Online (PTTO), which was formally launched in Fall 2019. That training is required before faculty can teach online, unless they are granted a waiver for alternative training or prior experience. See the sample PTTO syllabus. Furthermore, all four Schools have well-defined requirements and standards for developing courses and teaching online (see SoLA, STEM, HHS, and BEPD). The College has been certified under Michigan’s Distance Education State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement since 2019.

While the Live Without the Drive format was developed in response to COVID (see sub-criterion 3.A), it remains an option (see rationale). Faculty from across the College collaborated on its development, marketing, and training, ultimately delivering a webinar to train instructors in July 2020 (see agenda). That webinar was recorded and is on the CTEI website.

In addition to weekly programming and extensive resources available through its website, the CTEI provides “mini-conferences” such as the following:

- Building a HyFlex Modality (2022, presenter: Dr. Brian Beatty, HyFlex pioneer and Associate Professor of Instructional Technologies, San Francisco State University)
- Digital Education Days (2022 and 2023, in collaboration with The University of Michigan—Dearborn and Flint)
- Thinking Outside the Bot: Optimizing AI Good while Minimizing the Bad (2023, co-sponsored by the CTEI, the Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning, and the Instructional Technology Committee)
- Teach Students HOW to Learn: Metacognition is the Key! (2024, presenter: Sandra Y. McGuire, PhD, Retired Assistant Vice Chancellor and Professor of Chemistry, Director Emerita, Center for Academic Success, Louisiana State University)
- The AI Advantage: Enhancing the Hawk Learning Experience (2025, presented by HFC faculty and external consultants from Sentinel Technologies)

The Instructional Technology Committee (ITC) promotes use of technology to improve student learning and advocates for technological upgrades and faculty training. Its membership includes faculty, e-Learning support staff, IT professionals, and administrators. The ITC's major initiatives have included documenting School policies and procedures for creating and teaching online courses, creating and updating a course to orient students to online learning, and most recently vetting video editing and management software used in classes college-wide (see minutes for March 18, 2025). It is also evaluating learning management systems as the contract with Moodle is ending and its compatibility with HFC's needs wanes (see May 22, 2025, email and PowerPoint explanation).

To capitalize on internal talent, the faculty bargaining units and College administration collaborate to provide workshops to adjunct faculty who want to apply for full-time faculty positions. As seen in the agenda and workshop presentation, adjunct faculty are coached on the responsibilities of full-time faculty employment, effective application materials, and interview techniques. The College tracks the number of internal versus external full-time faculty hires by term.

Student Services Staff

Student services staff provide essential support across various areas, including Academic Advising, Career Services, Counseling, Enrollment Services, Financial Aid, and Student Activities (see organizational chart). Employees in each area have appropriate credentials and training.

Full- and part-time Counselors belong to their respective faculty bargaining units and thus are afforded ample professional development and evaluation. In Winter 2025, there were four full-time and nine part-time counselors. Additionally, Assisted Learning Services (ALS) ensures that students with documented special needs are accommodated. ALS has nine employees, two of whom are counselors. A full-time faculty Counselor leads the department and supervises the Accommodation Associate, Instructional/Testing Technicians, and Equipment Technicians. Counselors must have a Master's degree in Counseling, current State of Michigan Licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), and three or more years of experience working with students in a college setting. See job descriptions for Full-Time Counselor, Full-Time Counselor—Assisted Learning Services (ALS), Adjunct Counselor—ALS, and Adjunct Counselor—Student Outreach and Support.

Since the 2019 HLC visit, the Academic Advising area has been reorganized to streamline the student experience and provide more effective support. As explained in the January 2024 Faculty Organization minutes, Student Success Navigators are now called Academic Advisors, who primarily serve new students and students early in their HFC studies. As students advance and require more specialized advising, they are encouraged to consult with Program Advising Specialists, who are embedded in academic areas and hold office hours in those departments. The job descriptions for Academic Advisors and Program Advising Specialists list mandatory qualifications (also see transitioning from an Academic Advisor to a Program Advising Specialist). Students are assigned an advisor with expertise in their program. Academic Advising: Standard of Care defines advisors' duties and a robust onboarding and professional development program and performance review process.

The Honors Program Director, Career Services Officer, Athletic Director, and Student Activities Director belong to the full-time faculty bargaining unit. The first two have master's degrees while the Student Activities Director has an Ed.D. Each area has support staff to ensure effective operation.

Financial aid administrators and staff are highly qualified. The interim Director of Financial Aid has a Master's Degree in Business Administration with a Specialization in Management and a Master's of Science Degree in Sports Management. He also has 23 years of financial aid experience in the four-year public, four-year private, two-year public, and proprietary sectors. The Assistant Director has a BA and an MA. The Financial Aid Managers (including the Financial Aid Specialists) have a minimum of a bachelor's degree and three years of financial aid experience. The Financial Aid Associates have a minimum of an associate degree and one year of financial aid experience.

All financial aid staff receive ongoing training through annual updates, staff meetings on special topics, financial aid refreshers, and access to state and federal trainings and webinars, such as the following:

- Federal Student Aid Conference (FSA): annual national conference on Federal regulations
- Michigan Student Financial Aid Association (MSFAA) conference
- MSFAA: annual conference as well as one-day trainings
- Ellucian Live: conference on systems management
- NASFAA training: The Financial Aid Office subscribes to a package that includes 18 webinars annually; all staff are invited to participate.

Other Student Services staff also undergo training on a range of topics every semester. Faculty and staff from other areas are invited to participate. The record of events demonstrates cross-campus relevance and involvement. To enhance the student experience, Enrollment Services team members are cross-trained to guide students through the entire enrollment process.

To improve teaching and student support, many faculty, staff, and administrators conduct research.

The Office of Academic Affairs and the Faculty Senate co-sponsor annual faculty lectureship awards, which provide stipends for faculty to research and present on proposed topics. Typically, one adjunct and one full-time instructor receive this award annually. Past topics include the role of visual rhetoric and technology in the classroom, pre-education reflections on online clinical experiences, public discussion of climate change, and Fine Arts exhibits.

Full-time faculty sabbaticals are available as well (Article XXXII of bargaining agreement):

- Fall 2019, Michael Hill, English, conversion of dissertation on scholarly and public writing into book
- Winter 2020, Ryan Showler, Philosophy, philosopher Peter Wessel Zapffe and the philosophical subfields of deep ecology and environmental philosophy/ethics
- Winter 2024, Kevin Trovini, English, investigation of the disruptive impact of so-called “generative Artificial Intelligence” (AI) in the higher education classroom

Other examples of scholarship appear below:

- Chardin Claybourne, co-author of “Antiracism Glossary for Education and Life” in the Journal of College Academic Support Programs
- HFC’s Tazeen Ayub Strikes a “DEAL”
- HFC’s Harvell joins Community Conversation on Supporting Black Male Students
- Dr. Carolyn Casale Has Big Plans as HFC’s New Fulbright Coordinator
- HFC’s First Time Hosting Regional Astronomy Conference
- HFC’s hosting of the 2025 LAND Conference

3.D. Support for Student Learning and Resources for Teaching

The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.

Argument

HFC supports the complex needs of its diverse student body. Students receive this information from the College website, the LMS, syllabi, a document summarizing the services and contact information, and Welcome Back Days every Fall and Winter semester. _

Enrollment Services

Enrollment Services addresses students' needs at the beginning of their HFC journey. In its report following the 2019 site visit, the HLC team noted student frustration with the enrollment and course placement process, which the College has addressed.

Enrollment Services regularly assesses its effectiveness through student surveys and its activity logs (see 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 data). As explained below, Enrollment Services has made changes to improve the student experience.

With few exceptions, orientation is mandatory for new students and customized to fit the needs of specific groups, such as dual-enrolled students and veterans. Orientation is interactive and comprehensive, covering college expectations, policies, procedures, resources, activities, payment, financial aid, registration options, and tips for success.

The Orientation and New Student Engagement team is committed to continuous improvement. Following a necessary shift to online orientation during the pandemic, in 2023 the team re-introduced in-person orientation through Student Orientation, Advising, and Registration (SOAR) events, during which students may revisit topics from the online orientation, meet with their advisor, register for classes, check on financial aid, resolve student account questions, and obtain their HFC student ID. In August 2024, just before Fall semester began, Express SOAR benefited many students. Currently, both SOAR and Express SOAR are offered. Additionally, Enrollment Services recently developed a system to track Express SOAR students' success. This data should enable analysis of the impact of getting a late start on classes and help to identify the support these students need.

Furthermore, Enrollment Services has simplified the admissions and enrollment process. When HLC last visited, the Strategic Enrollment Management working group was in the process of reviewing and evaluating the steps to enrollment. Teams from Student Affairs and Marketing and Communications then created enrollment instructions for different categories of students (see the [Get Started webpage](#)).

Students receive guidance in other ways, too. Students meet with advisors at in-person SOAR events, and advisors use a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system (Ellucian CRM Advise) for more regular contact with students from initial enrollment and orientation through graduation (see Board Report 4680). Also, to supplement online orientation and SOAR, Program Welcome Days occur just before the Fall and Winter semesters and enable students and their families to learn about programs from Deans and faculty, to begin establishing relationships with advisors, faculty, and other employees, and to acclimate and learn about student support.

The enrollment process also includes course placement. Multiple measures are used, including high school GPA, Accuplacer, the English as a Second Language course placement test (CaMLA), ACT, and SAT. The English and Mathematics departments establish placement criteria. The College continues to assess its placement methods. It is participating in the Michigan Community College Association's statewide initiative to explore strategies for expanding guided self-placement. Additionally, HFC was a beta school for the upcoming Ellucian multiple measures program, which will provide tools and technology to support students throughout the course placement process.

Personal Support

Comprehensive, personalized student support is available. The Counseling department helps students adapt to and navigate the college culture, develop healthy habits, and manage mental health challenges and stress, for example. Student Outreach and Support provides similar services as well as financial assistance through the Student Emergency Aid Fund and Perkins Grant funds to address personal barriers to retention, such as assisting with tuition and fee balances, textbook and other class supply costs, and transportation or family care needs. Assisted Learning Services ensures equal access to educational programs for students with certified disabilities. Accommodations include special testing environments, sign language interpreters, text-to-voice software, and access to books in alternate formats.

Student Activities

The Office of Student Activities provides programming that aligns especially closely with the retention goals in HFC's strategic plans. Lists of activities for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 and year-end reports for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 document the diverse offerings. Also, reports for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 explain how activities were adapted to pandemic constraints. Sections below and elsewhere in the assurance argument highlight many of these activities and demonstrate their integration into the College culture.

Academic Support

Academic support services suit students' needs and goals.

Faculty Consultation

Faculty understand how important their support is to students, both in and out of class, and make themselves available to meet with students individually. Full-time faculty must hold scheduled office hours per Article XI.C of the bargaining agreement; they strive to be available at other times as well. Adjunct faculty are not required to hold office hours but are expected to be available to students outside of class time (Article VII.A of the adjunct faculty bargaining agreement). To accommodate students, in addition to on-campus meetings, instructors may communicate with students online via virtual conferencing software, email, and telephone.

Academic Alerts

HFC recognizes how critical the first few class periods are to students' semester-long success. The Never Attended (NA) Policy underscores that belief. The policy is communicated to students proactively, in welcome letters from faculty, on the College website, and on the homepage of Moodle, the LMS. This policy was revised for clarity and alignment with evolving course delivery methods. In Fall 2024, the Faculty Organization passed the following:

Instructors are required to flag students as having Never Attended a class if they do not meet the following requirements for the class in which they are enrolled:

- For face-to-face courses: Student attends at least one full class session or student completes one assignment.
- For hybrid courses: Student attends at least one full class session or student completes one online assignment.
- For Live Without the Drive (LWD) courses: Student attends at least one full class session or student completes one online assignment.
- For asynchronous online courses: Student completes one online assignment.
- For Hy-Flex courses: Student attends at least one full class session or student completes one online assignment.

The NA reporting deadline is typically two weeks into a 15-week semester. Students flagged as NA may not continue in the class.

Faculty Course Alerts enable timely intervention by College support personnel (see the process and alert triggers and usage). Faculty may submit alerts at any time in the semester to indicate problematic attendance, falling behind on assignments, and struggling with course content. The type of problem identified will trigger outreach by the appropriate department, which will then try to contact the student. Additionally, the student receives a supportive email indicating that the instructor has logged concerns. The Course Alert system is most used and most effective in the first half of the term.

Eshleman Library

Eshleman Library views its mission holistically. It addresses the needs of students who are learning about information literacy (see sub-criterion 3.B) as well as their need for a conducive study environment. The library provides space for individual and group study, technology, library instruction, reference help, research databases, and physical resources. Providing in-person and virtual access meets the needs of commuter students. See usage statistics for 2023-2024. The Library Committee (p. 26) helps to ensure that policies, processes, and resources promote student success.

Learning Lab

The Learning Lab provides both tutoring and other learning resources (see usage statistics). As the Learning Lab Tutoring Program explains, students may seek tutoring in-person or online and by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Professional and faculty tutors provide most of the services, supplemented by peer tutors with proven success in a subject and online tutoring through NetTutor (available 24/7). The Learning Lab also offers test preparation and study skills workshops, as well as subject-specific resources such as the “Bone Room,” a collection of anatomical models for students in Anatomy and Physiology classes. For an overview, see Test Preparation and Learning Resources. Some workshops address the needs of specific student populations, such as parents or caregivers and first-generation college students.

Writing Center

After opening in 2018, the Writing Center immediately became a mainstay of the College. Its comprehensive reports demonstrate its adaptability to students’ needs and unique learning challenges (see reports for Winter 2020, Fall 2020, Winter 2021, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024).

The annual report for academic year 2023-2024 presents usage statistics over a three-year period. The steady increase from 316 sessions and 141 unique users in Fall 2021 to 689 sessions and 258 unique users in Winter 2024 testifies to its effectiveness, especially given COVID’s challenges. Rather than losing users, the Writing Center gained them. While the report reveals the importance of maintaining online tutoring options, post-COVID statistics also show a preference for in-person sessions.

Per its mission, the Writing Center serves the entire College community. While English courses align most obviously with its services, use by students in other areas has grown. In Fall 2020, students working on English assignments accounted for 73.7% of users; in 2023-2024, that number dropped to approximately 58%, demonstrating increasing support of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC).

In the 2023-2024 report, a section on “closing the loop” documents some Writing Center achievements. They include addressing multilingual students’ needs by hiring a Respondent who is fluent in both English and Arabic, training Respondents in reading instruction (especially important given HFC’s deactivation of development reading courses under Michigan Reconnect legislation), and collaborating with the CTEI on a four-part WAC workshop for instructors in Winter 2024. The workshop focused on promoting student success and included using writing as a learning tool, designing and assessing assignments, and teaching writing to specific populations, including students with disabilities, adult students, and English Language Learners. The Writing Center’s future promises to be equally dynamic as it plans to partner with HFC’s Institutional Research department on a self-efficacy study, pilot a self-efficacy survey of students, and strategize to connect with students who are underrepresented as Writing Center users.

Online Learning Support

Several resources support online learners. The online learning area of HFC's website explains the various class formats that incorporate online learning and offers self-assessments for students to determine if online learning matches their needs and abilities. Videos and tutorials exist on how to use software, focusing especially on Moodle (the LMS).

Furthermore, all students are automatically enrolled in a free, non-credit course, College 102: HFC Online Prep Course for Academic Success. While this class is not a college-wide requirement, many instructors assign their students to take it. It is designed to take only a few hours and emphasizes study habits and technical skills crucial for online learning success. Because it is designed as a Moodle course, it simultaneously introduces students to key features of the LMS they'll use in other classes.

Accessibility is a key concern when choosing online learning products. For example, the Blackboard Ally Accessibility Software, which integrates into Moodle, helps remove barriers to digital materials for students with visual, auditory, cognitive, and/or physical disabilities (see Board Report 4606).

English Language Institute

The English Language Institute (ELI) is invaluable to the multicultural population of Dearborn and surrounding communities. As explained in its mission and goals, the ELI provides comprehensive support for English Language Learners, helping them to acclimate and learn vital communication skills for academic, professional, and personal success. In addition to noncredit classes, its credit-bearing curriculum facilitates matriculation into HFC's College curriculum (see ELI class guide). Its classes are supplemented by a range of resources (see, for example, Fall 2024).

Athletics

Student-athletes receive special support to juggle classes and demanding practice and game schedules. A new position was filled in November 2024: Associate Athletics Director for Academic Support, who focuses primarily on supporting the progress of student-athletes, especially those who are academically at-risk. The Associate Director also handles bi-weekly student-athlete progress reports that are submitted by instructors. The Associate Director collaborates with other campus support services, such as Academic Advising. Additional Athletics Department initiatives include renovating the locker rooms to include study areas with Wi-Fi, computers, printers, and dedicated study spaces. Also, in Fall 2024 a pilot program began for the men's and women's basketball teams, wherein the Athletics Department partners with Counseling to provide mental health services.

Faculty Senate Initiatives

Established in 2019 as a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, the Student Success Committee (SSC) consists of faculty and staff from across the College. It collaborates with other

areas, such as the Office of Student Affairs, to evaluate student support services and recommend improvements. Issues explored by the committee include emergency financial support for students, transportation issues, and more (see the May 2023 year-end report). Notable recent accomplishments include the following:

- Developing a relationship with the regional bus system (SMART) to obtain and distribute information and resources for students with transportation challenges.
- Examining the relationship between early registration and student success, resulting in collaboration among departments to encourage early registration.
- Gaining approval to install two printers for free student use.

Designed to complement the SSC, the Faculty Senate created the Student Preparedness Work Group in December 2022 (see Senate minutes for December 7, 2022, and March 15, 2023). This group focused on assessing whether students had the necessary information and orientation from the beginning of their HFC experience to support their success. The group's findings and recommendations were then presented to the Faculty Organization (May 8, 2023, minutes).

Concurrently, student usage of HFC's website and best practices were evaluated, and a completely updated website was rolled out in May 2024 based largely on the work of the Marketing and Communications team responsible for the website, along with College-wide collaborations. Also, the orientation program was revised, and students visiting the Counseling office are now greeted by either the Administrative Assistant or trained Student Assistants.

Financial and Career Support

HFC's diverse student body necessitates a range of financial support. The Student Financial Wellness Survey Report by Trellis Strategies in Fall 2023 offers a snapshot of many of those needs. As an open-access institution in southeast Michigan, HFC depends on students' access to financial support. According to 2024-2025 Fast Facts, 66% of non-dual enrollment students (11,000+ students) received financial aid, totaling \$59.8 million. The Office of Financial Aid explains various types of financial aid and provides information to help students assess their needs, complete the application process, and understand how those funds may be used and conditions for continued eligibility. Additionally, the HFC Foundation offers more than 150 scholarships and provides students with leads to external scholarships. Most are based on academic performance, financial need, or focus of study. (See scholarship statistics for 2019-2024.)

Certain financial aid programs at HFC specifically encourage degree completion. In Fall 2020, the College launched the HAWK Pathways Debt Forgiveness Program in partnership with Oakland University, Wayne State University, and University of Michigan—Dearborn. It targets students who have “stopped out” from HFC for at least two years, are not currently in the Collections process, and meet the requirements specified in the background document. While this program was well received (see students enrolled by semester), it was paused in Fall 2022 and evaluated for financial implications and sustainability for the College and for regulatory compliance. Currently, the program is not actively promoted, but it is available to students under extenuating circumstances. A revised debt forgiveness program may be considered in the near future. Students who are in their final semester at HFC or who are within 6 credit hours of completing their degree may also

receive support from Tuition Completion Grants through the Student Emergency Aid Fund (see below).

HFC has participated in the Detroit Promise Program since its founding in 2016 and boasts the largest enrollment of any college. This program enables Detroit high school graduates to earn an associate degree, a four-year degree, or a technical certificate tuition-free. Coaches help students make the transition to college-level learning, help students negotiate college procedures and take advantage of college resources, offer personal support, and more. In 2022, the College approved creation of the Detroit Promise Office in the John McDonald Student and Culinary Arts Center (see Board Report 4623). In the 2023-2024 academic year, a record 63 Detroit Promise students graduated from HFC (see article). The Detroit Promise team is also working on a plan for its students that aligns closely with the College's Strategic Plan. Recognizing the program's value, in December 2024 the College hired three new Detroit Promise Success Coaches through philanthropic support and created two new leadership positions: Detroit Promise Program Coordinator and Detroit Promise Coach, Transition Specialist. Currently, five staff members are dedicated to this program.

At the course level, instructors make affordability a key criterion when choosing textbooks. Open Educational Resources (OERs) have been gaining ground at the College. To support this trend, at Fall 2024's convocation, Academic Affairs presented "OERs, Student Success, and Equity," which documented the impact of OERs on students and generated faculty discussion about researching and evaluating potential OERs for their classes. Other strategies for making course resources affordable were also discussed.

The Career Services Office connects students to employment opportunities and helps them explore career options and prepare for the hiring process (see HFC Career Planner). The Fall Career Expo typically features 50-100 employers looking to recruit students and alumni, while the Spring Job Fair typically hosts 30-60 employers. The office also manages the application process for student workers and trains them on employee behavior standards, and it coordinates all aspects of on-campus cooperative education. In the past year, the College hired an Employer Relations Coordinator to expand and deepen student-employer connections through industry-specific "mini-fairs."

Recognizing that unforeseen incidents, however small, can easily derail students' academic progress, HFC established the Student Emergency Aid Fund, originally with seed money from the General Fund. Now supported partly by individual donations and partly by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP) Sixty by 30 Barrier Removal Grant (see grant application and description as well as HFC's completed application), this fund may be especially important for students who are ineligible for Federal Financial Aid. As described on the webpage, the application process for students is straightforward and the response is quick. The dashboard tracks not only the amount of aid awarded and the number and demographics of student recipients but also the types of aid and their impact on enrollment and student success.

Some financial support is highly specific. Recently, the full-time faculty bargaining unit volunteered to sponsor two HFC students to participate in Rocket Kids, an experiential learning

program affiliated with the University of Toledo. Students in this program get hands-on experience as interns working with children on overseas military bases while also earning credits at the University of Toledo.

Students' financial literacy can both reduce the need for emergency funds and ensure effective use of other resources. To that end, in 2021, HFC partnered with Dearborn Public Schools to pilot a financial literacy class (see the The Detroit News' "Michigan's First Financial Literacy Curriculum Being Tested in Metro Detroit"). Then, in Fall 2024, HFC created a new course, BFN-141: Personal Finance. To benefit the entire student body, the Office of Student Affairs has provided financial literacy programs, too (see the co-curricular assessment report for Fall 2022-Fall 2023 and the Fall 2024 and Winter 2025 flyers).

Health and Wellness

Unsurprisingly, financial stressors affect students' physical and mental health (see the 2023 HFC Student Financial Wellness Survey Report). Many College resources support students' physical and mental health and wellness.

Nuanced, flexible support is closely tied to Counseling, including the Student Outreach and Support (SOS) office (see the 2020-2025 report). Similar to the model for academic intervention through Course Alerts, described above, in Fall 2024, HFC instituted Non-Course Alerts that address personal needs. Non-Course Alerts may be submitted by any faculty or staff member for any student. For more serious problems that threaten the student or community, the Behavioral Intervention (BIT) and Counseling Assessment Response Education (CARE) Team may be involved, as described in the Student Code of Conduct Due Process Procedure. The BIT Policies and Procedures Manual describes a comprehensive, cross-functional team and a process that includes training, privacy protections, and in-depth threat assessment for appropriate interventions. In a recent presentation on reporting guidelines, the Director of Student Conduct and Compliance/Title IX Coordinator explained the types of situations that faculty and staff may encounter and how to report incidents depending on severity. This information is also concisely captured in the Referral and Reporting handout. From 2021 to 2025, BIT and CARE served 197 students.

Food insecurity affects students nationwide, and HFC students are no exception. Open year-round, the HAWKS' Nest provides supplemental food assistance and information about other local resources, such as food pantries. It relies on monetary, food, and personal item donations. It also inspires community. HFC Hawks Athletics has regularly participated in the Michigan Community College Athletics Association Hunger Games, in which schools compete for donations. For the second year in a row, HFC ranked second, providing 3531 meals. Annual reports for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024

document other internal and external partnerships, marketing strategies, the types and amounts of donations, and statistics on ever-growing student use.

The Office of Student Activities sponsors many wellness activities, as reflected, for example, in the Wellness Series for Fall 2021, Winter 2022, and Winter 2023. Other events include HIV-AIDS Awareness, Stress Management, and Power of Hope.

Dr. Henry J. Bowers Focus Group

Open to all HFC students, the Dr. Henry J. Bowers Focus Group (formerly the Black Male and QUEENS Focus Group) fosters academic success, professionalism, and leadership skills while analyzing portrayals of Black men's and women's historic, social, economic, educational, and professional experiences. It also has a food pantry and a study area in its office. Its website describes and includes videos of many of its events. Two of the most impressive are the annual Retention, Success and Best Practices Conference (the sixth annual conference was in April 2025) and the Walking in Excellence Conference (the fourth annual conference was in 2024).

Veteran Services

HFC's Office of Veteran Services provides comprehensive support. In addition to facilitating veteran students' use of College resources and navigation of procedures (including priority registration for classes), it helps students understand their veteran and military education benefits and provides a sense of community. In 2023, HFC was named a Gold-Level Veteran-Friendly School for the sixth year.

International Student Services

The International Student Services office addresses the needs of HFC's international student population. This support includes evaluating and documenting immigration status, negotiating the academic and social culture, and securing housing.

Teaching Resources and Infrastructure

The College's teaching resources and infrastructure support student success.

There is college-wide access to computers, a host of software, and Wi-Fi (see Technology and Computer Resources). Of special note is the computer loan program. Initially established to support students during the COVID lockdown, it has continued as student needs have persisted. Additionally, the Media Center contains PC and Macintosh computers as well as class-related software.

On-campus classroom technologies enable diverse learning. The College has 20 HyFlex

classrooms and labs for Anatomy and Physiology (three), Biology (five), Chemistry (five), and CNC (one) as well as 28 computer labs.

Career and professional programs maintain state-of-the-art labs to give students hands-on experience, which may be furthered by clinicals, cooperative education, and internships. For example, located on the East Campus, the Nursing Program features many skills and simulation labs that recreate real-world scenarios to contextualize learning. This “clinical classroom” experience transfers to clinical placements in Southeast Michigan’s health care facilities. HFC’s Ophthalmic Technician Program, the only accredited program in Michigan, has patient exam stations in its labs, and the Physical Therapy Assistant Program maintains a lab with up-to-date equipment and technology. Other Health Careers programs, such as the Radiographer, Respiratory Therapist, and Surgical Technologist programs, feature similar labs and clinical requirements (see Health Careers and Nursing Program webpage). The Culinary Arts Program provides hands-on experience in its well-appointed kitchens and through internships and HFC’s student-run restaurant, 5101, which was recently renovated (Board Report 4742). The Automotive Technology Program’s up-to-date equipment includes the brand-new Dynamometer and engines lab. These are just some examples.

Recently, the 50-year-old Technology Building was renovated and expanded to keep pace with technological advancements, innovation, and local industry needs (see HFC News article for an overview). While renovations focused on deferred building maintenance, the addition created new labs and work spaces to support collaboration, entrepreneurship, regional workforce training demands, and business and industry partnerships. The project was completed in December 2023 (HFC Capital Outlay Plan FY 2026-2030).

On a smaller scale, the College maintains a steady stream of funding to upgrade technology as faculty pursue innovations in teaching and learning. The Technology Investment Fund (see Tuition and Fees) is administered by the Technology Investment Committee (TIC), which has members from across the college. It solicits and evaluates proposals that increase student access to instructional technology, especially innovative uses of technology. These proposals are evaluated not only in terms of their initial installation needs and costs but also in terms of their sustainability. Proposals approved by TIC go to the Board of Trustees for approval (see Board Reports 4556, 4586, 4605, 4611, 4635, 4667, 4694, 4729, and 4745).

3.E. Assessment of Student Learning

The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.

Argument

Building on its strong foundation and prior successes, HFC's assessment of student learning continues to grow. The College broadcasts the importance of assessment to employees and students in many ways, including on its public-facing website and posters hung across campus explaining the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). For example, to advertise the significance of the Critical Thinking and Information Literacy ILO that was the focus in the 2022-2023 academic year, the Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning (CASL) created posters that related the ILO to HFC's mission statement (HAWKS are Thinkers CT-IL poster).

Since receiving positive feedback from the HLC after its 2019 site visit (see core component 4.B in HLC's final report), CASL has continued to facilitate ILO, Program Learning Outcome (PLO), and Co-Curricular Learning Outcome (CCLO) assessment while responding to HLC's advice to increase participation, show stronger evidence of "closing the loop," and bolster co-curricular assessment, which at that time was in its nascent form. Furthermore, CASL and Academic Affairs are collaborating to develop a module in Coursedog (see sub-criterion 3.A) that will facilitate assessment processes and reporting and use assessment data to strengthen HFC's course catalog, curriculum management, and academic scheduling systems.

Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning

The Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning (CASL, p. 5) facilitates assessment college wide. See annual reports for 2019-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025.

The makeup of the committee reveals its full integration into college-wide educational practices and the College's recognition of assessment's importance. CASL's roster lists full-time and adjunct faculty from all four Schools as well as two administrators appointed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and a Student Services representative. Members have staggered terms to ensure continuity while also inviting new perspectives and broad participation. Four co-chairs, one from each School, lead the committee and provide reports on assessment to the Faculty Senate, the Faculty Organization, the Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) for each School, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. A Co-Curricular Assessment Team Lead from Student Affairs spearheads assessment of CCLOs. The CASL handbook (pp. 14-16) defines each member's role.

CASL's overall structure has evolved since HLC's 2019 visit. At that time, two assessment committees existed: one focusing on ILOs and the other on PLOs. Debate over the effectiveness

of this two-committee structure began 2020 (CASL—Programs meeting minutes for October 1, 2020 and CASL—ILO meeting minutes for December 10, 2020). After careful consideration (see, for example, CASL—Programs meeting minutes for March 3, 2022 and Faculty Organization minutes for May 9, 2022), in 2022, these two committees merged to form the current structure (CASL Handbook, p. 13). The activities and concerns of CASL—ILO and CASL—Programs overlapped significantly. Combining the committees has improved efficiency, strengthened synergy college wide, and improved decision-making.

Participation in Higher Learning Commission events indicates CASL's expertise and enables it to educate the College community. For example, CASL had a team of faculty at the HLC roundtable, which was a multi-year commitment, and a CASL co-chair was solicited for an article that was published in HLC's newsletter, *The Leaflet*. Also, HFC gave a poster presentation at HLC's conference in April 2020. (See CASL—ILO meeting minutes for December 10, 2020.) In 2021, several CASL members participated in HLC's General Education assessment seminar; in a combined meeting of CASL—Programs and CASL—ILO, this team then reported on what they learned and how it could be applied at HFC.

CASL co-chairs have pursued other professional development, too. They attended the IUPUI Assessment Institute in 2021, 2023, and 2024. They also participated in Student Learning Assessment in Michigan (SLAM) conferences and in November 2024 presented “All Hands on Deck: Using Rhetorical Appeals to Create a Multi-Faceted Faculty Engagement Strategy.”

Assessment Process and Improvements

The assessment process is comprehensive and dynamic, and it is well documented in the CASL handbook, which is available to all faculty via the CASL Corner Moodle page along with ILO assessment guides and other information. (See the Civil Society and Culture, Critical Thinking, Communication, and Quantitative Literacy guides and Computer Technology guide 1 and guide 2.) The framework continues to follow a proven three-step method to assess ILOs, PLOs, and CCLOs (handbook, pp. 5-7), and learning outcomes align with the College's mission statement (see chart). However, CASL has also made improvements.

In addition to merging the CASL—Programs and CASL-ILO committees, as described above, CASL determined that focusing on only one ILO per year would simplify the process and foster deeper, college-wide engagement. The Focus ILO Initiative gained support in Winter 2020. However, the pandemic postponed its official approval until Fall 2020, when the five-year Focus ILO assessment cycle began with the Civil Society and Culture Focus ILO (see handbook, p. 17, and CASL meeting minutes for March 5, 2020, and October 1, 2021).

The Focus ILO process also strengthened the roles of ILO faculty representatives and cross-disciplinary, inclusive subcommittees. For their given year, they compile Focus ILO reports that document ILO assessment completed in programs and in general education courses, share observations about the process and student learning, and recommend improvements, including the possible need for rubric revisions. Faculty ILO representatives frequently present at School meetings (for example, the Critical Thinking and Information Literacy ILO Fall 2024 presentation).

The Focus ILO schedule has improved outreach and support of assessment projects throughout the College in other ways, too. The CASL co-chairs have met with faculty individually and in groups and workshops, collaborated with the CTEI, and provided assessment training modules. Some examples follow:

CASL Group Meetings and Workshops:

- Computer Technology ILO Reporting Workshop (all faculty invited), March 2022
- Assessment Summit (all faculty invited, program leads strongly encouraged to attend), Fall 2022
- Presentations to the Faculty Organization, January 2023 and May 2023
- Program Assessment Meeting (for program leads to discuss PLO cycle updates and “closing the loop”), September 2024

Collaborations with CTEI, Instructional Technology Committee, and Writing Center:

- Authentic Assessment and Academic Integrity Mini-Conference
- Critical Thinking and Information Literacy ILO Teamwork Tuesday Presentation, February 2023
- Quantitative Literacy ILO Teamwork Tuesday Presentations, September 2024 and January 2025
- Writing Across the Curriculum Series, Winter 2024

Also, CASL members provide feedback on assessment reports (e.g., PLO feedback for Automotive Technology, Surgical Technologist, and Public Health). The benefits are twofold: (1) program leads use the feedback to improve current and future reports, and (2) CASL members develop a fuller understanding of the assessment process and may recommend improvements.

To generate more useful results, in August 2024, the reporting guidelines were clarified and supplemented with examples (see updated PLO and updated Program ILO Reporting Guidelines). Additionally, degree programs have mapped their curriculum to identify where PLOs and ILOs are taught at the “Introductory,” “Developing,” and “Competent” (IDC) levels. These maps provide PLO assessment schedules, too. Examples of programs’ curricular IDC maps follow:

- Computer Information Systems (AAS)
- Graphic Design (AA)
- Surgical Technologist (AAS)
- Social Work and Counseling (AA)
- Biology (AS)
- Culinary Arts (AAS)
- Culinary Arts (BS)

Faculty feedback indicated that programs often struggled to see the process to completion because of a crowded assessment cycle that asked them to “close the loop” on one PLO assessment while beginning another PLO assessment cycle. At a September 2024 meeting of program leads, programs were given the option of following a new, six-year cycle that allows them to assess multiple PLOs in one academic year and then act on the results, reassess, and close the loop on those same PLOs in the following year.

Increased Involvement

CASL fosters college-wide involvement by communicating about assessment in meetings, issuing invitations to join subcommittees, leveraging its rotating, elected membership, and sharing resources.

Participation has grown steadily and substantially, despite disruptions caused by the COVID shutdown. See the completion rates for PLO and Program ILO reports (curriculum revisions explain fluctuations in the total number of programs):

PLO Report Completion Rates:

- 2020-2021 academic year: 45/68 (66%)
- 2021-2022: 56/68 (82%)
- 2022-2023: 44/56 (79%)
- 2023-2024: 49/57 (86%)

Program ILO Report Completion Rates:

- 2020-2021 (Focus ILO: Civil Society and Culture): 28/68 (41%)
- 2021-2022 (Focus ILO: Computer Technology): 36/68 (53%)
- 2022-2023 (Focus ILO: Critical Thinking and Information Literacy): 42/56 (75%)
- 2023-2024 (Focus ILO: Communication): 49/58 (84%)

Rates for 2024-2025 will be calculated after the Focus ILO: Quantitative Literacy report is submitted in October 2025.

To supplement Program ILO assessment and achieve a fuller understanding of student learning, instructors of general education classes are also heavily involved, as summarized in the Focus ILO reports for Civil Society and Culture, Computer Technology, Critical Thinking and Information Literacy, and Communication. Furthermore, faculty from across the College join ILO subcommittees to advise the CASL ILO representative, help develop assessment rubrics, and help facilitate the process (CASL handbook, pp. 18-21).

Co-curricular learning opportunities primarily involve on-campus activities, so co-curricular assessment experienced more serious disruption during the pandemic. However, it has taken important steps to resume and expand its work. As defined in Section 4 of the CASL Assessment Handbook, at HFC, co-curricular activities are “academically related, and not part of a course at HFC. Co-curricular activities enable student intellectual, social, emotional, moral and aesthetic development.” These activities align closely with Student Affairs, thus bringing faculty and staff from that area into the assessment process. See, for example, reports from the Student Activities Office and Eshleman Library cited below.

ILO Updates

While programs determine PLOs, ILOs are the responsibility of the entire college. At least every

five years, ILOs are reviewed and updated as necessary. In Winter 2021, a Faculty Senate task force disseminated a survey to faculty, which concluded that the ILOs did not need revision. However, in Winter 2024, informed by in-depth analysis of Focus ILOs and recognition that “the ILOs could better reflect the needs of today’s workforce, our broader society, and the individual lives of our students,” CASL recommended that the Senate form another task force to revise them (CASL meeting minutes for January 18, 2024, and proposal to Senate for ILO review). This motion passed the Senate and the Faculty Organization in Fall 2024. The 16-member task force met five times during the Winter 2025 semester and plans to meet bi-weekly during the Fall 2025 semester in order to complete its work by December.

Use of Assessment Results

Assessment results have led to improvements in the assessment tools and student learning.

To foster consistency and make assessment results comparable, each ILO subcommittee creates and maintains a rubric to be used by all faculty. The Focus ILO Initiative prompted revisions of these rubrics to ensure applicability across disciplines. The subcommittees surveyed the program leads to get feedback on the rubrics and used that feedback to revise rubric sub-outcomes to ensure interdisciplinary usefulness and alignment with ILO language. Since 2021, all rubrics have been revised at least once, most recently by the Civil Society and Culture ILO subcommittee for use in 2025-2026, when it will be the Focus ILO. See below:

- Rubric for Computer Technology (revised Fall 2021)
- Rubric for Oral Communication (revised Winter 2021)
- Rubric for Critical Thinking and Information Literacy (revised Fall 2022)
- Rubric for Written Communication (revised Fall 2023)
- Rubric for Quantitative Literacy (revised Winter 2024)
- Rubric for Civil Society and Culture (revised Winter 2025)

The Focus ILO reports include an overview of student performance and provide suggestions, such as scaffolding assignments, revisiting course prerequisites, and better integrating HFC student support services into instruction.

- Civil Society and Culture Focus ILO Report (2020-2021)
- Computer Technology Focus ILO Report (2021-2022)
- Critical Thinking and Information Literacy Focus ILO Report (2022-2023)
- Communication Focus ILO Report (2023-2024)

(Quantitative Literacy’s final report is due in Winter 2026.)

Programs use ILO and PLO assessment data to make focused changes in instruction. Below are examples of full application of the assessment cycle: performing initial assessment of an outcome, devising and implementing actions to improve student learning, reassessing the outcome, and updating the initial report to close the loop.

- Criminal Justice (AA) PLO Report – 2022-2023

- Fitness and Sports Management (AB) PLO Report - 2020-2021
- Graphic Design (AA) PLO Report - 2021-2022
- Management (AB) PLO Report - 2022-2023
- Medical Practice Facility Business Management (AB) PLO Report - 2022-2023
- Music (AA) PLO Report - 2023-2024
- Nursing (AAS) PLO Report - 2020-2021
- Physical Therapist Assistant (AAS) PLO Report - 2022-2023
- Pre-Elementary Education (AA) ILO Report - 2019-2020
- Respiratory Therapist (AAS) PLO Report - 2023-2024
- Telecommunication (AA) PLO Report - 2022-2023

Departments also use assessment results to improve student learning. The English Department illustrates this well with its continuous assessment of the Written Communication ILO over the past six years. Notably, the course master for English 131: Introduction to College Writing, a gateway course, lists learning outcomes that map directly to the sub-outcomes in the ILO rubric. Assessment showed that students consistently struggled with idea development. A deeper dive into the Winter 2024 assessment results revealed specific teaching methods that were used by instructors with the strongest student performance. Those methods were then promoted at an English Department Brown Bag session and through a document distributed to all English 131 instructors at the beginning of the Winter 2025. Reassessment at the end of the term revealed 63% competency in idea development for ENG 131 students, compared to the previous year's competency rate of 56% and the 35% competency rate from the 2021-2022 academic year. Given this evidence of effectiveness, ENG 131 instructors will be asked to continue these teaching strategies. In addition, these strategies will be shared with programs across the College, which have also noted weaknesses in their students' skills with idea development (see the Communication Focus ILO Report).

As noted above, co-curricular assessment was impeded by the pandemic shutdown. However, it quickly regained momentum. The Office of Student Activities reported on its assessment of the Intrapersonal Development CCLO in its Financial Literacy Series (Fall 2022-Fall 2023). Its reassessment in Fall 2023 affirmed the value of the series, which will be continued. In 2022-2023, reports on the Intrapersonal Development CCLO were submitted by the Student Activities Office and Eshleman Library. Additional Student Affairs areas were engaged in Fall 2023, when members were oriented to the assessment process and CCLOs and ideas for assessment projects were discussed (see November 9, 2023, minutes). At the February 3, 2024, CCLO subcommittee meeting, assessment plans for Winter 2024 were discussed for Athletics, Career Services, Counseling/Assisted Learning Services, Enrollment Services, and Student Activities. Minutes for March 21, 2024, state that the CCLO Committee chose to focus on the Diversity CCLO. Additionally, other institutions' co-curricular learning outcomes were investigated, and HFC's CCLOs were revised accordingly (see 2023-2024 CASL Annual Report).

3.F. Program Review

The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.

Argument

Since HLC's last visit in 2019, the Program Review process has been updated for efficiency and usefulness.

2019-2021 Academic Years

Despite COVID-related challenges, in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, the College conducted substantial Program Review, using procedures outlined in the 2019-2023 Program Review Handbook and in accordance with the institutional program review schedule.

The 2019-2020 academic year was understandably fraught. Just prior to the COVID lockdown, in January 2020, Program Review training occurred under the guidance of the Coordinator of Program Improvement and Effectiveness, and all data booklets for programs under review were completed and disseminated to faculty, with an assigned completion date of May 2020. However, the COVID-related restrictions that began in March 2020 hindered completion. Only one program completed its assigned review: Physical Therapy Assistant.

Fortunately, programs quickly adapted to the realities under COVID, completing a full, robust cycle of program reviews in 2020-2021. See the list of program reviews and the following examples:

- Telecommunication
- English Language Institute
- Architecture/Construction Technology

2021-2022 Academic Year

In 2021-2022, program reviews continued per the 2019-2023 Program Review Handbook. See the list of program reviews and the following examples:

- Mechatronics
- Automotive Technology
- Chemistry

In March 2022, an extensive labor market data analysis by Academic Affairs spurred review of all program pathways (see, for example, the Academic Affairs strategic planning retreat agenda). Academic Schools and Faculty Chairs received program enrollment, completion, and labor market data in order to identify pathways that no longer served the needs of HFC's learning community (see, for example, March 2022 occupational analysis and program analysis for Paramedic/EMT). Six pathways were flagged for further review: Legal Studies, Welding,

Children and Families, Paramedic/EMT, Nursing Care Skills, and Pharmacy Technician. After extensive discussion and collaboration with program faculty, deactivation of these six pathways was recommended to the Cabinet (December 2022) and the Board of Trustees (April 2023). Following Board approval, the deactivation process began at the beginning of the 2023-2024 academic year, with teach-out plans initiated. (See Curriculum Report: Recommended Changes for Academic Year 2023-24.)

2022-2023 Academic Year

Following the 2019-2023 Program Review Handbook, the program review process continued. See the list of completed reviews and the examples below:

- Radiographer
- Environmental Studies
- Spanish Studies

Coincidentally, staffing changes at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 academic year inspired the College to reexamine the program review procedures, compliance, and effectiveness for the next cycle, beginning with Cabinet-level discussions. After identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the existing process, oversight of Program Review was shifted from the Office of Strategy and Human Resources to Academic Affairs, with the understanding that the Institutional Research and Business Intelligence Department (IRBI) would maintain a vital role in providing data.

Along with this change in oversight, through a shared leadership framework, Academic Affairs gathered feedback from faculty and academic leadership on the existing Program Review process while developing its new strategic plan.

2023-2024 Academic Year

The previous year laid the foundation for some major initiatives.

In November 2023, the 2024-2026 Academic Affairs Strategic Plan was presented to Cabinet, the Faculty Senate, and the Academic Council for review and feedback. Goal I.C. relates directly to Program Review:

- Coordinate Program Review & Effectiveness process within the Academic Affairs division.
 - Regularly provide all programs relevant and accurate program vitality and student success data: enrollment trends, rates for completion, retention, transfer, drops, and DEWI; time-to-credential.

In order to pursue the new strategic plan and continue the prior year's discussions, the Academic Affairs and Strategy areas paused the formal, 5-year program review cycle for 2023-2024. Instead, they collaborated on an analysis of the existing process. Areas of concern included the

following:

- *Lengthy 5-year review cycle.* How were data integrity and accuracy affected, especially as programs evolved over time? Did the 5 years of program data allow for legitimate comparisons?
- *Faculty workload.* Was the program review process too onerous? Was all of the data necessary, meaningful, actionable, and complete?
- *Manual compilation of long program review booklets.* Would automating data collection and using data visualization tools (e.g., program review dashboards) be more effective?
- *Accountability and closing the loop.* How could faculty action plans be improved by including processes for closing the loop, and how could departments be held accountable for following up on those action plans?
- *Number and viability of program pathways.* How many pathways existed that had little to no enrollment or few to no completers? What was the value of completing program reviews for these pathways?

Addressing these concerns began with examining the large number of program pathways. IRBI started building files to assist faculty with auditing program pathways, work that would officially begin in Fall 2024. Together, IRBI and Academic Affairs tested a variety of data modeling and business intelligence tools such as Power BI to explore ways of sharing and presenting program review data.

2024-2025 Academic Year to September 2025

The 2024-2025 academic year addressed the program pathway audit and revision of the Program Review process.

Academic Affairs' Fall 2024 convocation introduced the pathway audit initiative (see, for example, the September 2024 BEPD pathway audit). The goal was not to eliminate entire programs but instead to identify for elimination any unviable degree and certificate offerings within broader program areas. Program faculty received data on student demand and community need. Ultimately, program leads identified 52 pathways for sunsetting and deactivation. The audit's timing ensured that ongoing program review would focus on only viable, active pathways.

In January 2025, the College sent a cross-functional team representing the Academic Affairs and Strategy areas to HLC's Program Review Workshop in Phoenix, AZ. There, the team began developing a new process aimed at addressing the concerns noted in 2023-2024 to yield more actionable insights for faculty and leaders alike. See Data Requirements for Program Review. It was proposed that the previous 5-year cycle be replaced by a recurring Annual Program Review Self Study process (see visualization and Academic Affairs presentation, Fall 2025) to foster continuous improvement led primarily by faculty content experts. As an automated, dynamic online platform (see, for example, Nursing's Annual Program Review—Self Study form), this process provides accessible data sets and integrated guiding questions for faculty use when developing action plans for the ensuing year. Ten programs will pilot the new process beginning Fall 2025.

In addition to this annual review, all programs will participate in a more comprehensive, detailed

Program Vitality process on a 4-year cycle, rotating yearly between the four Schools. Thus far, individual program pages have been built in SharePoint that contain program-specific data from academic years 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024 (for example, the Nursing Program Review packet). Visualizations of these data sets are being developed and will be augmented by Program Data Dashboards once IRBI has completed HFC's transition to the Informer data management system. Together, the Annual Program Review Self Study and the cyclical Program Vitality processes provide a data-informed, meaningful, holistic, and actionable model for meeting core components outlined at HLC's Academic Program Review Workshop, including the following:

- Program Overview, Description, and Mission
- Curriculum Assessment and Improvement
- Student Demographics, Outcomes, and Student Success
- Academic Support and Career Opportunities
- Faculty Achievement
- Financial (Budget) and Facilities Resources
- Innovations and Opportunities for Improvement
- Alignments with the College's Mission and Strategic Plan

3.G. Student Success Outcomes

The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions.

Argument

Various evidence illustrates the College's continuous pursuit and documentation of student success, which is central to HFC's mission. Student success was key to the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and is articulated even more explicitly in the 2022-2024 and 2025-2027 strategic plans, where the goals are further refined. The 2022-2024 and 2025-2027 plans focus on the same priorities: access, retention, completion, and transfer. (For program-level data, see sub-criterion 3.F.)

Institutional Data: Academic Success

The IRBI Department maintains dashboards tracking the 2022-2024 and 2025-2027 Strategic Plan priorities and goals for student success. These dashboards facilitate data analysis and use:

- Access
- Retention
- Completion
- Transfer

The College reports significant progress toward achieving these goals. (Also see sub-criterion 4.C.)

Access

The College documents mixed results for its access-related goals, which focused primarily on enrollment and college readiness for underrepresented and historically underserved student populations. Both race/ethnicity and gender were analyzed. While Black/African American student enrollment overall increased slightly from academic year 2022-2023 to academic year 2023-2024, enrollment of Hispanic/Latino students dropped substantially. Furthermore, comparing 2021-2022 with 2024-2025 reveals substantial enrollment decline for both student populations: by 96 Black or African American students (3.9%) and by 65 Hispanic or Latino students (9.4%).

Results are somewhat more encouraging for the second access-related goal: increasing the enrollment of underrepresented student populations in high-opportunity programs. An analysis of race/ethnicity shows that 30% of the thirty top programs increased their enrollment of underrepresented students from 2021-2022 to 2023-2024; the other 70% experienced declines. For underrepresented genders in programs, male enrollment in female-dominated programs showed significantly more improvement than female enrollment in male-dominated programs.

Retention

Retention gains were encouraging but fell short of the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan goals. The College set the following targets for the number of credit hours completed by first-year students: 24 or more credits for full-time students and 15 or more credits for part-time students. Part-time student achievement of this benchmark has increased (42.1% for 2021-2022, 38.4% for 2022-2023, and 47.8% in 2023-2024). The number of full-time students meeting the target dropped slightly, from 52.3% in 2021-2022 to 51.2% in 2023-2024. Between baseline and 2024-2025, full-time credit accumulation decreased by 2.5% while part-time credit accumulation increased by 5.7%. The significant restructuring of HFC's Academic Advising model, described in sub-criterion 3.C, should spur improvement.

The DEWI rate (the number of students who got a D, E, Withdrawal, or Incomplete) increased significantly for gateway courses in Math and slightly for gateway courses in English. However, interpreting these statistics is complicated by the impact of Michigan Reconnect in 2020, which required the College to change how it addressed students' developmental needs. Developmental prerequisite classes were terminated in favor of co-requisite classes in 2022, as explained in sub-criterion 3.A. The College will continue to track the effectiveness of those co-requisites as well as additional support through the class English 090A: Academic Literacies and the Math Tutor position, both initiated in 2022.

Completion

Student completion rates improved substantially. Between the 2021-2022 academic year and the 2022-2023 academic year, raw numbers of awards conferred (certificates and degrees) increased by 164% (from a baseline 1,495 completions in 2021-2022 to 3,947 in 2022-2023), far surpassing the 20% strategic plan goal. This increase is largely attributed to introduction of an auto-award process for certificates. By 2024-2025, completions grew 109% from baseline, again far surpassing the strategic goal.

Also, the institutional IPEDS graduation rate grew. The baseline for 2019-2020 was 9.8%. In 2021-2022, it was 10.9%. It held essentially steady at 10.2% in 2022-2023 but increased to 13.8% for the 2018 cohort (reported February 2025). To maximize graduation, recently, a policy that required 20 additional credit hours for each associate degree beyond the first was deactivated (Faculty Organization minutes for January 3, 2024). Because students will still need to complete courses specific to the additional degree programs, that policy seemed unnecessary. Furthermore, that policy change will enable HFC to auto-award associate degrees, not just certificates. Projected values of 15.2% in 2025-2026 and 21.05% in 2026-2027 indicate that the College is poised to exceed the 15% strategic goal. Therefore, the 2025-2027 Strategic Plan set a new goal of 25%.

While the College did not fully achieve another completion-related goal in the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan (reducing the number of excess credits for a first associate degree by 20%), it made progress. On average, there were 10.2 excess credits for associate degrees for the 2021-2022 academic year and 9 excess credits for the 2023-2024 academic year, a nearly 12% decrease. The recent program pathways audits and additional touchpoints with academic advisors (see sub-criterion 3.F) should help students complete their degrees more efficiently.

Transfer

The Strategic Priority 4 dashboard indicates that the goal to increase the three-year transfer rate was not achieved, but this result deserves further analysis. IPEDS methodology disallows including completers who transfer to be included in the institutional transfer rate. By that measure, HFC's overall institutional transfer rate has declined. However, the College compiles data internally to quantify both students who transfer without an award and students who transfer with one. The transfer rate of students with an HFC degree or certificate steadily increased under the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan: 33.7% in 2021-2022, 41.8% in 2022-2023, and 49% in 2023-2024. Thus, the institutional transfer rate decline actually reflects an increase in the graduation rate.

Dissemination of data for decision making

These data inform planning and enable assessment of institutional interventions. Faculty and administrators have access to the dashboards, and progress toward achieving the strategic goals is discussed with the entire College community during each semester's State of the College presentation (see, for example, August 2024 and January 2025). Additionally, IRBI created an executive summary of strategic plan progress for consideration when the College transitioned from the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan to the 2025-2027 Strategic Plan.

Post-Graduation Student Success

For many career and technical education programs, student success is reflected in industry certification pass rates, which are continuously monitored at the program level and reported to the State of Michigan each Fall as part of annual compliance reporting.

Unfortunately, Michigan's data collection practices impede HFC's ability to gather student employment data. Many community colleges in other states can track graduates' employment and earnings outcomes using unemployment insurance (UI) wage record data, which is more reliable than using surveys for longitudinal tracking and research. In Michigan, access to this data is limited. In 2021, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunities Office of Employment and Training issued a revised version of its Pathfinder tool (see 2024 annual update letter and report). While it provides some data on employment outcomes and return on investment for HFC graduates, its information is not comprehensive and thus has limited use. Therefore, the College has employed other methods to bridge this gap in publicly available data. For example, HFC surveys its graduates. While the data are limited, they reveal positive job placement experiences and attest to the helpfulness of HFC programs.

The College also stays abreast of additional tools being developed. For example, the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) very recently launched a new labor market data dashboard, which may prove useful in the future. As explained in a September 2 email to Michigan community college presidents, this Labor Market Outcomes Occupational Wage Analysis Tool is accessible through MCCA's website and "provides colleges with wage data for approximately 800 occupations in all ten Michigan prosperity regions." The dashboard tabs indicate the range of data available.

Qualitative Data

The IRBI team collects, analyzes, and disseminates qualitative student outcome data from surveys and focus groups. A Student Success Panel was launched in 2022 and repeated in 2023 and 2024, with results shared with the College community in reports and open presentations. Results were also used to create tailored presentations to specific departments for planning purposes. See, for example, the presentation to Academic Advising.

The Student Experience Study also launched in Fall 2022 as a longitudinal focus group study. In addition to seeking a comprehensive understanding of the HFC student experience, the study sought additional insights into factors contributing to student success over time. This student focus group met once a semester from entrance to HFC through graduation, with a different focus for each session. For example, the first semester discussion focused on the enrollment process and the transition to college while the second semester focused largely on their academic experiences and integration into the college community. Results were shared with Cabinet.

Benchmarking

HFC benchmarks student success outcomes at the regional, state, and national levels, to measure the College's performance against peer institutions and top performers.

The IRBI Department submits data to and uses data from industry-recognized sources, including IPEDS, Perkins, the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), the National Community College Cost and Productivity Project (NCCCCP), the Student Transcript and Academic Record Repository (STARR), which is submitted through the Center for Education Performance and Information (CEPI), the Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP), and professional accreditation bodies.

The 2022-2024 strategic planning cycle began by comparing HFC's student success outcomes to similar community colleges in the region. As direct measures of student achievement, graduation rates and transfer outcomes were of particular interest. (See the 2021 Graduation Rates Presentation and Transfer Rates Presentation to the Strategic Planning Team.) The College used this benchmarking process to set the metrics identified in the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. For continued monitoring of these local comparisons, IRBI created IPEDS Benchmarking Dashboards, which also include national benchmarking against recent Aspen award finalists.

HFC is a long-standing participant in the NCCBP, allowing the College to measure its performance against other institutions at a state and national level (see NCCBP Strengths Reports from 2022, 2023, and 2024 as well as the NCCBP HLC Report, NCCBP 3-Year Aggregate Report, and NCCBP Michigan Report). The College leverages this data when contemplating new student success initiatives (see, for example, the November 2021 NCCBP email discussion between VP of Strategy & Human Resources, VP of Academic Affairs, and IR staff), when reporting student success outcomes to the Board of Trustees, and in data presentations to the campus community (Future Driven with Data Workshop

Announcement).

In 2024, HFC joined the National Student Clearinghouse Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP). While PDP is a nationwide effort to help colleges and universities understand students' educational progress and outcomes, participation has regional benefits as well. The Detroit Regional Chamber (a significant partner of HFC) united 11 participating colleges and universities in the Detroit Drives Degrees Data Collaborative, an initiative that will use PDP data to gain more accurate, comprehensive insight into student progress and achievement in the Detroit region. HFC and the other participating colleges will submit data to the PDP platform. That data will help the Detroit Regional Chamber evaluate the impact of strategies and policies meant to remove barriers to post-secondary education and student success. Initial reports provided to HFC leadership include the PDP Executive Report, PDP Retention, PDP Gateway Course Completion, and PDP Credit Completion Ratio.

Student-Specific Accomplishments

Student success can also be documented individually. (Also see sub-criterion 3.B). The Honors Program celebrates many successes, including the following:

- Members of Phi Theta Kappa
- Recipients of scholarships and awards, such as the following:
 - Detroit Community-Engaged Research Program Fellowship
 - Goldwater Scholarship
 - All-USA Academic Team Scholarship
 - New Century Pathway Transfer Award
 - Transfer Scholarships to Wayne State University, University of Michigan—Flint, University of Detroit—Mercy, Siena Heights University

Among the many students that HFC is exceptionally proud of is 2024 Rhodes Scholarship recipient Emmanuel Orozco Castellanos. While this award comes on the heels of his earning a bachelor's degree at University of Michigan—Ann Arbor, HFC was his launching point. He is the first-ever Rhodes Scholar to have attended HFC before transferring and credits HFC's Honors Program, curriculum, and teachers with helping him build a foundation for excellence. Two other standouts are Soliman Touelh and Cortney Rinehart, who won the highly competitive Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation in 2024 and 2025, respectively.

Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

Argument

With well-qualified and well-trained staff at the helm, comprehensive policies and procedures ensure that the College provides high-quality educational programming for students to achieve their certificate, degree, and transfer goals, across all modes of instruction. In-depth assessment of student learning and program review support continuous quality improvement. Numerous articulation agreements and partnerships as well as external, program-specific accreditation attest to the appropriateness and rigor of the curriculum. Student success initiatives and student support services are equally robust and dynamic and attend to students' needs from matriculation through graduation and transfer. Achievement of student success outcomes is evident in institutional data on the Strategic Plan's goals, post-graduation documentation, and benchmarking at the regional, state, and national levels.

4 - Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

4.A Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

Argument

The College's effectiveness depends on collaboration.

Shared Leadership Structure

Shared governance has long been the backbone of the College because it operationalizes the mission so effectively. The leadership structure webpage describes a “participatory model” of Shared Leadership that depends on “collaboration and communication among all stakeholders, including employee groups, students, our community, and the Board of Trustees.” Criterion 2 discusses the Board’s deliberative approach and policies and practices that engage stakeholders to ensure well-informed decisions. The non-instructional organizational chart not only defines key roles and responsibilities but also shows how they converge under a collaborative administrative structure.

This structure adapts as needed. For example, a reorganization in 2017-2018 created four Schools under Academic Affairs: the School of Liberal Arts (SoLA), the School of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), the School of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the School of Business, Entrepreneurship, and Professional Development (BEPD). Initially, these were all led by a Dean and an Associate Dean (organizational chart for 2019). In 2023, several structural changes occurred to improve efficiency and effectiveness (see the public notification in 2023). While changes to SoLA and STEM involved only minor adjustments to the reporting structure, changes to BEPD and HHS were more substantial and initiated by the Schools themselves:

- BEPD Instructional Leadership Team meeting minutes, October 21, 2022 ; option C structure passed by BEPD in September 2023.
- HHS (September 11, 2023, meeting minutes , item 6).

The changes were then approved by the Faculty Senate, the Academic Council (October 18, 2023, meeting meetings , item II), and the President's Cabinet, yielding the current administrative structure . The Faculty Senate minutes for October 11, 2023 , summarize the need to reorganize leadership in these two Schools to better manage the diversity of programs and administrative workload and to enhance collaboration in multi-program career areas.

The President's Cabinet offers another example of adaptability. In 2019, the Cabinet consisted of five vice presidents; the current Cabinet has seven vice presidents and an executive director. Furthermore, some vice presidents' roles have been modified, as recapped below:

- The Vice President of Human Resources and Campus Safety position was eliminated. Human Resources was moved under one of the vice presidents. The Manager of Campus Safety, while not on Cabinet, was reassigned to report directly to the President, reflecting the increased importance of safety measures in the era of COVID (see the President's October 2020 message). In July 2025, the Manager of Campus Safety was again reassigned, this time to report to the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for Financial, Facilities, IT, and Auxiliary Services (see the President's July 2025 message). This realignment supports collaboration between the Campus Safety and Facilities offices.
- The Vice President of Legal Services/General Counsel role previously existed as a Cabinet position but went unfilled under this title from 2017-2019. During that period, the College employed a Director of Legal Services reporting to the Vice President of Financial, Facilities, and Auxiliary Services. This structure was unsuccessful. After careful analysis of institutional needs, the position was reclassified as a Vice President in August 2019, where it has remained. (See Cabinet update email .)
- The Director of Marketing and Communications, who had been reporting to the Vice President of Student Affairs, was promoted to a Cabinet position as Vice President of Marketing and Communications . This change better captures the position's College-wide importance.
- A new position was created as a Cabinet member: the Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB). (See rationale in sub-criterion 1.C.)
- Titles of certain vice presidents were modified to reflect their new responsibilities. The Vice President of Institutional Research, Planning, and Accreditation is now the Vice President of Strategy and Human Resources. The Vice President of Financial, Facility, and Auxiliary Services is now the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer—Finance, Facilities, IT, Purchasing, and Auxiliary Services.

The College is currently undergoing a change in leadership at the Presidential level. The previous President of seven years stepped down in June 2025. The Board of Trustees appointed the Vice President of Strategy and Human Resources to be Interim President while the College searches for a permanent President (see May 2025 email from the Board of Trustees to the College community). As explained in a July 2025 message , the reporting structure to the Vice President of Strategy and Human Resources was temporarily modified to ensure continued smooth operation of the College during the transition.

Other Shared Governance Structures

The employee bargaining unit agreements and constitutions and the College's governance structure support a collaborative culture that extends beyond upper management and engages employees directly.

Employee bargaining units

The collective bargaining agreements and constitutions for administrators, full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and support staff stress employees' shared governance rights and responsibilities within the overall administrative framework.

- The Administrators Association Constitution , Article 2, lists several objectives, including to "further the educational interests of students," "collaborate with the Cabinet and the Board of Trustees in the formation and advancement of the College's mission and goals," and "foster positive community relationships."
- The Support Staff Association (SSA) bargaining agreement (Article 9) discusses members' service to the college and the community and participation in college-wide shared governance via committees, meetings and other events. The SSA's constitution not only mandates attendance of the SSA President or designee at Board of Trustees' meetings (Article V, Section 3) but also lists standing committees, including the Social and Publicity Committee, whose duties include "encourag[ing] and offer[ing] suggestions to members for volunteer opportunities on or off campus."
- The full-time faculty bargaining agreement mandates consistent participation in shared governance "to advance the mission of the College" (Article XIX). While participation at the course and program level is essential, so is "[p]articipating in College-wide shared governance and College-wide Union committees."
- Adjunct faculty are encouraged to serve the College beyond the classroom by participating in shared governance, for which they receive compensation commensurate with the activity (Adjunct Faculty Organization bargaining agreement , Article XVII.C.3).

Faculty Organization, standing committees, and task forces

All full-time faculty and adjunct faculty belong to the Faculty Organization, a vital arm of shared governance. The Faculty Organization Constitution (which is protected by the full-time faculty bargaining agreement, Article V) states, "The three responsible agents—faculty, administration, and governing board—should endorse the principle of joint responsibility and endeavor to work out a judicious balance in the areas of their collective responsibilities..." (Article I.D). Because teaching and learning fall under faculty expertise, the Faculty Organization, advised by the Faculty Senate, primarily attends to academic policy and curriculum issues (Article III.A.3). However, the constitution also provides for faculty involvement in deliberations over other topics that impact learning, such as creation of new schools; creation, curtailment, or elimination of programs; facilities planning; and allocation of resources. Such participation may occur through task forces, steering committees, standing committees, and councils (Article

III.A.4-III.A.10 and Article IV). Faculty also serve with administrators and staff on committees to select certain College personnel (Article VI).

The composition of standing committees that report to the Faculty Senate enables shared governance across the College. For example, while the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Standing Committee consists mostly of faculty, it is open to the entire community and currently includes administrators. The Curriculum Committee's members represent faculty, administrators, and student services, who provide relevant information from areas such as Enrollment Services, Advising, Financial Aid, and Academic Affairs (e.g., November 4, 2024, meeting minutes , item V.C). The Curriculum Committee's voting structure recognizes the pedagogical expertise of faculty as well as their need to understand how their decisions impact other areas of the College: faculty have voting privileges while non-faculty members act as advisors. The Technology Investment Committee, which evaluates proposals for instructional technology projects, is one of the most diverse as it must consider pedagogical, financial, and technical questions related to implementation, training, and maintenance of technology. Its members include faculty, administrators, and staff.

The Student Success Committee is similarly diverse and demonstrates the effectiveness of college-wide collaboration to achieve the institution's mission. From a 2023 basic needs study , the committee determined that transportation posed significant barriers to student success. According to the study (p. 25), 19% of HFC students surveyed reported that they sometimes (13%), often (4%), or always (2%) missed class because of unreliable transportation; these percentages are higher than those for students from two-year schools overall, where 9% sometimes missed class for this reason, 2% often did, and 1% always did. Because class attendance is crucial for student success, the committee considered various solutions, including shuttle busses used by a neighboring institution, UBER Business, State benefits, and apps for public transportation (April 3, 2024, minutes). Ultimately, SMART Flex, a van-share program (October 16, 2024, minutes), was considered the most feasible and useful option. The committee then acquired SMART flyers, posters, and postcards for distribution to students by key areas of the College, such as Counseling, Campus Safety, Career Services, and the Student Center (January 15 and February 18, 2025, minutes).

Standing committees may also collaborate with or request advice from non-members. For example, several standing committees have been considering how to manage artificial intelligence in an academic setting: the AI Standing Committee, the Instructional Technology Committee, the Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation, and the Social Justice and Equity Committee. The AI Standing Committee assumed responsibility for investigating the logistics of AI use at the College and invited the Director of Network and IT Infrastructure to its March 28, 2025, meeting (see minutes). He explained that using existing AI infrastructures would be more effective and affordable than creating one in-house, and he suggested investigating Sentinel Technologies, a consulting company that specializes in AI implementation in education. Representatives from Sentinel attended the committee's April 2025 meeting, and follow-up will occur in the Fall.

While standing committees address ongoing issues, the College also employs task forces and working groups to manage time-limited, often urgent or unanticipated matters. These, too, invite

full participation and collaboration among stakeholders. Take, for example, the College’s negotiation of the COVID lockdown. A cross-functional, short-term group was created to develop plans for ensuring a safe campus environment once the lockdown was lifted. This so-called Return to Campus Team consisted of faculty, administrators, and facilities and support staff (see the President’s May 2020 message and sub-criterion 2.A). Preparing for the Higher Learning Commission’s site visit offers another example. Early on, a committee consisting of faculty and administrators from across the College was created to help collect evidence for the assurance argument (see HLC Committee membership); they then provided feedback on report drafts.

Student Engagement

HFC understands the importance of involving students in deliberations. Student input is solicited in several ways.

The Student Council seeks input from and advocates for the student body at large by serving on College committees and working with departments to represent students’ interests and address their concerns. (See duties of the Communications Liaison and Representatives-at-Large.) The Student Council confers with other areas of the College as needed. For example, several Student Council meetings have included the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Director of Student Activities, and the Assistant Director of Enrollment Services, Assessment, and Student Orientation. As meeting minutes demonstrate, by collaborating with these offices, the Student Council successfully implemented the “Hawk Hub,” modeled after the Student Involvement Hub at University of Michigan—Dearborn, for peer support (see meeting minutes for January 11, January 25, February 15, and March 14, 2024). Meeting minutes throughout the 2024-2025 academic year show how the Hawk Hub was implemented, how it involved the Honors Program, and how it has improved. Other examples of collaboration include consulting with the Manager of Campus Safety to execute the Student Council Platform on wellness and safety (minutes for November 11, 2024) and granting a request from the Interim Director of Academic Services to attend a meeting to solicit information (minutes for February 10, 2025).

Students are also represented on several College committees, such as the Council of World Cultures, the Student Newspaper Board, and the sustainability committee (Sustainable HFC), and participated on the 2022-2024 Strategic Planning Team.

Through the Alumni Association , the College maintains ties to its graduates, who automatically become members. Alumni are encouraged to sign up to stay abreast of events and activities and to advance their careers through networking with other alumni and accessing resources through Career Services. “Class notes” demonstrate how alumni successfully apply their learning to nonacademic situations. Such success stories may then be publicized on the College website, reinforcing the relevance of an HFC education and providing motivation to students and staff alike. Take, for example, one graduate’s use of a fellowship-related award to support a local nonprofit organization that she founded and another graduate’s success as a research scientist, who hopes to give back to HFC as a teacher in the future:

- Alumna wins \$7,000 through optiMize to support non-profit work
- Research scientist found healthcare path through HFEC

Community Outreach

The College mission stresses serving stakeholders and the public good. This is facilitated by public Board of Trustees meetings, which include a period for public comment and which are posted on YouTube, and by specialized positions at the College.

Recognizing Dearborn's large Arab American population, HFC created the position of Arab American Community Liaison to build and strengthen positive relationships between the College and local Arab American institutions. Its many duties include reporting regularly to the College president and Executive Director of Human Resources on projects and collaborations as well as communicating and collaborating with organizations such as the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services, the Arab American Chamber of Commerce, the Ford Community and Performing Arts Center, and the Dearborn Public Schools System. It also identifies and promotes special events, workshops, volunteer opportunities, and scholarships.

The full-time faculty bargaining unit also contributes. Its Executive Board includes a Vice President for External Affairs, who facilitates the Publicity and Public Relations Committee and the Community Relations Committee. These committees pursue the best interests of both faculty and the College at large. So does the Political/Legislative Action Committee. (See Article VIII of the Constitution of the Henry Ford Community College Federation of Teachers.) These committees provide structure for College advocacy, for example, to secure funding through the State and through local millages. See, for example, Local 1650 President's letter soliciting endorsements and the advocacy campaign material (mailers 1, 2, and 3) that the full-time faculty unit helped to create and distribute.

Institutional Research Structure

HFC continually strengthens its identity as a data-informed institution. The 2016-2020 Strategic Plan (which was extended through 2021 under COVID) highlighted "data and information" as a resource required for plan implementation and success. While data use was operationalized in pockets, the College struggled to maintain a broad culture of inquiry throughout the pandemic. However, staffing turnover in the Institutional Research department in late 2020 and early 2021 provided opportunity for the College to evaluate the department.

Between December 2020 and April 2021, the Institutional Research department completed a comprehensive evaluation of its services, operations, and structure. The analysis was informed by departmental discussions, focus groups with HFC stakeholders, comparative research across Michigan community colleges, and best practice research based on literature from the Association of Institutional Research (AIR), a global association for higher education research

professionals. These efforts culminated in a proposal to the Cabinet for a restructured department under the name “Institutional Research & Business Intelligence (IRBI),” with updated job descriptions and new positions that would fill gaps in the department’s service delivery. The plan was approved in Summer 2021 and implemented during the Fall 2021 semester. The structure remains in place except for one position that was piloted and deemed unnecessary.

Several noteworthy achievements have occurred since the department's revitalization, including the implementation of data dashboards/visualizations, implementation of student focus groups and qualitative research studies, and a renewed emphasis on leveraging data for student success. (See sub-criteria 3.G and 4.C.) The department is now implementing a new data reporting tool, Entrinsik Informer, which will streamline the process for end-users to access data, enable users to create their own reports and data visualizations, and analyze data for daily use.

Additionally, the College recently hired a Coordinator of Institutional Effectiveness , whose responsibilities include converting data into information that is readily understood and actionable as well as educating faculty and staff about the role of data in departmental reviews, decision-making processes, and quality improvement efforts.

Data-Informed Decision Making

Multiple administrative structures facilitate data-informed decision making, such as the Institutional Research and Business Intelligence department (IRBI), the Information Technology Oversight Team (ITOT), and the Data Integrity Oversight Team (DIOT), which reports to ITOT. See sub-criteria 4.B and 4.C for examples.

Under new leadership, IRBI has deliberately promoted the use of institutional data for mission-aligned decision-making. IRBI has developed a mission, vision, and values statement , a department-wide strategic plan , and a refreshed internal web presence.

IRBI supports the institution through three primary functions:

1. **External Reporting:** IRBI ensures the College’s compliance with state and federal reporting requirements. These reports are accessible through IRBI’s public-facing resources, contributing to the College’s accountability and data transparency practices.
2. **Internal Strategic Projects:** Aligned with the College’s strategic priorities, IRBI conducts in-depth analytical studies, such as benchmarking, enrollment, and retention analyses, to inform institutional planning and student success initiatives. These studies are disseminated to key internal constituencies whose operations and objectives are served by data insights.
3. **Ad Hoc Data Requests :** In response to stakeholder needs, IRBI manages a formal data request system, enabling units College-wide to access customized reports and dashboards for their operational or planning purposes. Over the past two academic years, IRBI processed at least 176 ad hoc requests. These data requests support a wide range of

functions, illustrating IRBI's responsiveness and engagement in institutional effectiveness.

IRBI presentations educate the College community about how data can drive decision making. For example, various faculty and administrators attended the following presentations: Future Driven with Data: An overview of IRBI and IRBI student profile presentation . Initial estimates indicate that IRBI data requests increased by over 2% afterwards.

4.B Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

Argument

The College manages its resources to achieve short-term goals and ensure long-term viability. It maintains a sustainable budget that extends at least three years beyond the current year (for example, sustainable budget for fiscal year (FY) 2026-FY 2028) . That budget factors in enrollment, tuition and fee rates, payroll and benefits for all employee bargaining units, and other significant variables. Guided by its mission , the College's investments and expenditures prioritize serving students and the community. In fact, the number of full-time faculty is now tied directly to enrollment and State funding (see Article IV.B in the full-time faculty bargaining agreement).

Fiscal Resources

The College monitors its financial health and budgets accordingly.

External documentation

The College's financial stability and strength are well documented. Plante & Moran, PLLC, conducts annual, independent financial audits of the P-14 Dearborn Public Schools District. HFC is discussed in a separate section in each financial statement, and the College's separate financial statements are included in "Other Supplementary Information" (2020 , pp. 13-23, 77-80; 2021 , pp. 12-21, 77-80; 2022 , pp. 13-22, 76-79; 2023 , pp. 13-23, 78-81; 2024 , pp. 12-21, 76-79). The HLC Composite Financial Index (CFI) measures the College's financial strength over time. The CFI is prepared in two ways: with GASB 68 & 75 and without. Comparison of the FY 2020 index with the FY 2024 index reveals significant positive movement:

- CFI with GASB 68 & 75 improved from -2.27 in FY 2020 to 1.10 in FY 2024 .
- CFI without GASB 68 & 75 improved from 3.20 in FY 2020 to 6.50 in FY 2024 .

These gains signify effective, active budget management.

Also see the College's Investment Income Policy and 2020 Bond Rating Report .

Internal budget reports

HFC's reporting practices convey its fiscal responsibility.

The President and the Board of Trustees receive regular reports, including the following:

- Original annual budgets, both short and long versions:
 - FY 2021: short and long
 - FY 2022: short and long
 - FY 2023: short and long
 - FY 2024: short and long
 - FY 2025: short and long
 - FY 2026: short and long
- Mid-year budget adjustments, made in January:
 - 2021 adjustment and Board Report 4577
 - 2022 adjustment and Board Report 4622
 - 2023 adjustment and Board Report 4669
 - 2024 adjustment and Board Report 4728
 - 2025 adjustment and Board Report 4765
- Year-End President's Report, which is the financial budget to actual report for the General Fund:
 - Year-end report FY2020
 - Year-end report FY2021
 - Year-end report FY2022
 - Year-end report FY2023
 - Year-end report FY2024

The mid-year budget adjustment presented to the Board of Trustees is based on actual results and revised projections for the year, factoring in enrollment, payroll, state aid, property taxes, and other known variables. With the exception of FY 2020, the final year-end President's reports show that actual results of Excess Revenues (Expenditures) exceeded the budgeted amount. The start of the pandemic explains FY 2020's anomaly: virtually no classes were offered in May-June.

Recent modifications in cash flow reporting practices reflect the institution's financial stability. Following the financial crisis in 2012-2013, the College expanded its reporting to include providing the Board of Trustees with a monthly cash flow schedule, which gave a snapshot of HFC's cash and investments at certain points as well as the low overall cash and investment points each year (for example, cash flow reports for February 13, 2020 ; May 13, 2021 ; April 13, 2022 ; April 13, 2023 ; January 4, 2024 ; and January 16, 2025). After January 2025, this reporting was discontinued because the College's cash position was no longer concerning (see cash positions for FY2013-FY2025).

Revenue

On the revenue side, enrollment and associated tuition and fees receive the most attention. A daily report compares the current fiscal year with the same date from the prior year. During the Fall and Winter semesters and the lead-up to them, each week these daily reports are used to project the annual General Fund tuition and fees. Examples follow:

- Student Fees Forecast, September 14, 2020
- Student Fees Forecast, September 15, 2021
- Student Fees Forecast, September 14, 2022
- Student Fees Forecast, September 13, 2023
- Student Fees Forecast, September 10, 2024

- Tuition and Fees Summary: Fiscal Year Comparison

Tuition and fee policies protect affordability and access. Prior to 2023, Administration approached the Board of Trustees annually with any proposed tuition increases. In 2023, a new policy was adopted that made tuition increases more predictable. The new tuition approval policy is based on the prior year's Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and defines allowable rates of increase. Comparatively speaking, HFC's tuition is low. See rankings for FY 2025 (from highest to lowest tuition):

- In-district tuition: HFC 24th out of the 28 Michigan community colleges
- Out-of-district tuition: 20th
- Out-of-state tuition: 12th

When HFC's comparatively small property tax footprint is factored in, the College's affordability is even more pronounced. (See community college comparison of combined tuition/fees and property tax per full-year equivalent.) The tuition and fees report from MI School Data based on FY 2025 reveals the following rankings on a full-time equivalent basis:

- In district: HFC 21st out of 28 Michigan community colleges
- Out of district: 19th
- Out of state: 13th

Adding in full-time equivalent property taxes from FY 2024 yields the following:

- In district: HFC 28th out of 28 Michigan community colleges
- Out of district: 28th
- Out of state: 26th

Enrollment trends support the College's financial stability. In FY 2020, HFC experienced its first enrollment increase in several years. Both Fall 2019 and Winter 2020 were up from the previous year. While the pandemic ended that trend through FY 2023, FY 2024 and FY 2025 rebounded and achieved enrollment increases (see Student Tuition and Fee Summary Projection for FY 2025). FY 2025's enrollment is projected to be approximately 253,000 credit hours, close to FY 2019's number. From FY 2019 to FY 2024, an influx of dual enrollment students from the Dearborn Public Schools resulted in a 3% increase in in-district students and a 3% decrease in out-of-district students. (See tuition and fee summary for FY 2019-FY 2024 . Note that FY 2021 appears unusually high because Spring/Summer 2020 classes were scheduled during the FY 2021 time frame.)

Expenditures

On the expense side, budget management concentrates on payroll and benefits, which represent approximately 82% of budgeted General Fund expenses. Since benefits are driven by payroll, payroll is projected as two components, which comprise 95% of budgeted General Fund payroll:

1. Payroll for exempt employees and all bargaining units except for the Adjunct Faculty Organization (AFO)
2. Excess contact hours, full-time faculty, and instructional payroll for AFO

From September through May each fiscal year, monthly payroll projections are prepared. The second component is more variable, depending on factors such as enrollment, the number of full-time faculty, and the desire of full-time faculty to assume EC, so projections compare EC and AFO expenditures from the prior year with actual monthly expenditures for the current year. Each month, the amount from the prior year is replaced with that for the current year. See below:

- Payroll projections for exempt employees and all bargaining units except for AFO through
 - February 28, 2021
 - February 28, 2022
 - February 28, 2023
 - February 29, 2024
 - February 28, 2025
- Monthly projected EC and AFO amounts
 - FY 2021
 - FY 2022
 - FY 2023
 - FY 2024
 - FY 2025 (through March; actual prior year amounts are highlighted in yellow)

On a departmental level, real-time access to budgets enables responsible planning (see, for example, Teaching and Learning Service's summary and detailed reports through Self-Service).

COVID Financial Support

The College judiciously used federal aid to sustain it and its students through the COVID pandemic. In April 2020, the College became certified to receive financial aid under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. From funds dispersed under this Act and the subsequent Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplement Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act, the College offset pandemic-related losses and expenses. From 2020 to 2022, the College was awarded and disbursed \$65,329,713, approximately 40% of which went toward Emergency Financial Aid Grants for students and 55% of which went toward institutional aid, such as replacing lost revenue and obtaining resources to support distance learning. See the U.S. Department Education's Education Stabilization Fund report . HFC's website also provides a more detailed breakdown of fund eligibility and use (CARES Act reporting).

Physical Infrastructure

The Capital Outlay Plans for fiscal years 2021-2025 , 2022-2026 , 2023-2027 , 2024-2028 , 2025-2029 , and 2026-2030 emphasize alignment with the College's mission. An external company (Stantec, Inc.) regularly conducts a facilities assessment that informs the planning and execution of projects (see section IV of each Capital Outlay Plan).

Several major projects directly support instructional programming and student success.

- The Innovation Institute/Technology Building renovation and addition were completed in December 2023 (section II.a, 2026-2030 Capital Outlay Plan). This project not only allows for

collaborative, interdisciplinary instruction, bringing together the business and technology fields, but also provides the advanced technological infrastructure needed to offer classes and programs that target technological and other skills gaps noted by potential employers. As explained in the 2026-2030 Capital Outlay Plan, “The renovated and expanded center ... will enable technology and occupational education students to enhance their technological program skills as well as develop product and service ideas for business and industry Technology-rich labs and learning environments will support project-and competency-based curricula” (pp. 8-9).

- The Integrated Energy Master Plan (IEMP) is ongoing. As noted below and in sub-criterion 1.B, it provides exceptional, innovative teaching, learning, and employment opportunities. It also saves money and contributes to environmental sustainability. In a 2024 presentation at the AEE World Energy Conference & Expo (slide 17), a team from HFC documented \$2M+ savings in utility costs, 40% or more gains in energy and water efficiency, and 50% decrease in carbon emissions.
- The Energy Learning Center (ELC) will be incorporated into the Technology Building and stems from the IEMP. The ELC will accomplish several goals: fulfill the College’s commitment to serve the public good by using resources efficiently and sustainably; prepare students for gainful employment in the quickly evolving field of integrated energy solutions; and host professional meetings focused on sustainable energy. The ELC will create “a pervasive energy productivity culture whereby all staff, faculty, and students have a greater understanding of the importance of proper energy management such that their future personal and business decisions will be influenced” (2026-2030 Capital Outlay Plan , p. 15).
- The Southeast Michigan Student Success Center (SEMSSC) is the newest project and will serve both the College and the community. The primary goal of the SEMSSC is to consolidate student services that are currently spread throughout the campus and to provide comprehensive, easily accessed support from a student’s admission through graduation, transfer, and gainful employment—i.e., to increase student success, as mandated by both the College’s mission and its Strategic Plan. Furthermore, it aims to provide space for scholarly and cultural presentations, civic engagement, and professional meetings.

The SEMSSC plan initially focused primarily on new building construction (see 2026-2030 Capital Outlay Plan , pp. 20-32), but a 50% increase over the initial cost estimate necessitated revisions. HFC’s Board of Trustees and the SEMSSC Steering Committee worked with the architect and construction management firm to devise a new plan, which focuses more on renovation than on new building construction. As explained in the President’s recent email , this new plan will enable the College to achieve the project’s original goals more cost-effectively. A follow-up presentation by the Dean to the School of Liberal Arts (the School that is most affected by the project) delved into more detail and invited discussion (see slides 17-36 of the presentation).

The Facilities Services staff receives training to manage both routine maintenance and special projects that support the College’s mission. As noted in Facilities Services’ mission statement , the department prioritizes fiscal responsibility, efficiency, service to the College community, and stewardship of natural resources. A sampling of projects reveals the scope of its activities:

- Routine maintenance (e.g., roof renovation and replacement, parking lot and sidewalk repairs)
- Environmental protection (e.g., work related to washout to the Rouge River)

- Renovations to support teaching and learning (e.g., lab upgrades, creation of the Honors Hub)
- Major projects (e.g., implementation of the IEPM)

Technology Infrastructure

Information Technology Service's (ITS's) 2020-2025 Strategic Plan includes its mission, values, standards, and goals. Its mission is to provide “secure, and scalable infrastructure solutions that support ... [HFC's] academic and administrative needs.” Among other responsibilities, ITS was crucial to accommodating COVID-related restrictions for on-campus classes. ITS's accomplishments for 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 demonstrate fulfillment of its mission. Also see sub-criterion 2.A (data integrity).

Fundraising

The HFC Foundation plays a critical role in ensuring the College's well-being and sustainability. Its Board of Directors comprises community and campus leaders who usually serve three-year terms. While the Foundation operates independently from the College as a non-profit organization, it aligns its work with HFC's mission. As documented in several parts of this assurance argument, students rely heavily on financial aid, including scholarships from Foundation fundraising. The Foundation's interests are represented at the Cabinet level by the Vice President of Institutional Advancement, who also makes regular reports to the Board of Trustees (see, for example, the April 2025 presentation). The history of scholarship awards from 2019-2024 (though not comprehensive) reveals the impressive magnitude of aid.

Grants

The summary of grants reveals support from varied sources, which is a testament to the College's strong reputation and to the community's commitment to students. While all grant funding assists the institution in serving students, the Detroit Drives Degrees Community College Collaborative (D3C3) grant has had a particularly significant impact in recent years. D3C3 is a regional initiative that supports community colleges in Southeast Michigan in increasing equitable access to educational opportunities, boosting graduation rates, and strengthening the regional college-to-career pipeline. Funded by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and the Ballmer Group, D3C3 provides participating institutions with financial resources and technical assistance to implement collaborative regional strategies in three primary areas: student success, K12 partnerships, and career and technical education initiatives.

D3C3 is a consortium grant. HFC received the highest grant allocation of the participating institutions at \$4.9 million, awarded in September 2022. The initial grant application and budget outline HFC's priorities for these funds, focusing on restructuring and revitalizing the college's Academic Advising department (see pp. 4-9 of the grant application for a description of this work), investing in the Detroit Promise Program (see sub-criterion 3.D), and enhancing K12 partnerships.

At initiative's funders' request, D3C3 efforts are evaluated and monitored by an independent third party, the American Institutes for Research (AIR). AIR partners with participating D3C3

institutions to collect student and institutional success data relative to funding priorities and reports the success of each institution's efforts to the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and Ballmer Group. Reports are generated quarterly and annually, with annual site visits. The College also provides reports directly to the funders by request, highlighting the success of D3C3 efforts (see Phase 1 Impact Report).

4.C Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

Argument

Data-informed planning and decision-making drive continuous improvement.

Strategic and Operational Planning

As discussed in sub-criterion 1.A, the College's strategic plan is dynamic and mission-driven, laying the foundation for the operational plan. Communications such as State of the College presentations help the institution pursue common goals. For example, the August 2023 presentation reviewed the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan priorities and initiatives. The August 2024 presentation gave a progress report on achievement of the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan priorities as well as a timeline for creating the 2025-2027 Strategic Plan.

For comprehensiveness and coherence, strategic planning involves the entire College. Both faculty and administrators serve on the Strategic Planning Team (see Faculty Senate minutes for September 8, 2021 (item VI.A) and October 9, 2024 (item VI.B), and the 2021 Strategic Planning Team roster), which is usually co-chaired by the President and the Faculty Senate Chair. Other areas, especially IRBI, support the task force's work, and employees College-wide are invited to contribute and give feedback.

The 2021 Strategic Planning Team convened during the Fall 2021 semester to develop the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. To enable immediate action, the team sought to develop a plan that was more selective and metric-focused than prior strategic plans and that was shorter in duration (two years versus the traditional five). Furthermore, the group agreed that the entire plan should center on student success and closing equity gaps rather than on college operations.

Within this framework, the 2022-2024 strategic planning cycle began with an evaluation of HFC's student success outcomes compared to other similarly situated community colleges within the region. As direct measures of student achievement, graduation rates and transfer outcomes were primary interests. (See the 2021 Graduation Rates Presentation and Transfer Rates Presentation to the Strategic Planning Team.) Enrollment and retention rates were also highlighted as the group considered the student lifecycle, from entry to exit. Access, Retention, Completion, and Transfer were identified as the four plan priorities, and benchmarking was used to set the goals and metrics identified in the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan . For continued monitoring, the IRBI team created IPEDS Benchmarking Dashboards , which also include national benchmarking against recent Aspen award finalists.

Recognizing that a two-year time frame is relatively short for fully executing and achieving the

goals of a strategic plan, the College determined that the 2025–2027 Strategic Plan would serve as a refresh rather than a completely new initiative. This approach allowed the College to build upon the successes and lessons learned from the 2022–2024 plan, ensuring continuity, momentum, and sustained progress toward its long-term goals.

A Strategic Plan Review Team convened in Fall 2024 to review the priorities, goals, and progress from 2022–2024 and discuss possible modifications to the plan. The four priorities (Access, Retention, Completion, and Transfer) were retained, with even fewer goals than were identified in 2022–2024. The 2025-2027 Strategic Plan was presented to the Board of Trustees in November 2024 (meeting minutes, item V.B) and approved in December 2024 (minutes, item IV.C). Next steps were presented to the College community at the January 2025 State of the College .

The annual Operational Plan develops organically from the bottom up. Departments propose initiatives (each of which must align with at least one of the Strategic Plan priorities). Then the initiatives are consolidated into plans for each area. These ultimately go to Cabinet for review and approval and then to the Board of Trustees. See the approved College Operational Plans for FY2022 , FY 2023 , FY 2024 FY 2025, and in-progress FY 2026 (the pandemic precluded a plan for FY 2021). Through the Plant Fund (for capital items) or other available funding from the General Fund, the Operational Plan mostly involves one-time projects and is incorporated into the College-wide budget via budget adjustment.

Data Analysis

The IRBI department compiles and analyzes data from internal and external sources. Regular areas of study are enrollment, student satisfaction and engagement, and student success, documented through achievement of specific Strategic Plan priorities and initiatives (see sub-criterion 3.G), Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and other studies and benchmarks. IRBI's reports, dashboards, and research findings provide a basis for decisions College-wide.

Enrollment

Market share analyses demonstrate HFC's competitiveness. Based on evidence from the Michigan Community College Data Inventory, in the 10-year period from 2013-2014 to 2022-2023, Michigan community college enrollment overall followed a nationwide trend of decline. However, HFC actually increased its market share, particularly in the Southeastern Michigan Region #1, where it experienced a 17% increase in market share of unduplicated headcount and a 23% increase in credit hour market share. Analysis of the 5-year period from 2018-2019 to 2022-2023 shows that HFC increased its market share of statewide unduplicated headcount by nearly half a percentage point and of statewide credit hours by almost a full percentage point. When compared to other community colleges in Wayne County, HFC's five-year enrollment increase is even more pronounced. (See 5-year and 10-year market analyses .)

These significant gains attest to the College's understanding of its unique population. For example, the Fall 2024 IRBI presentation to HFC employees profiles student demographics and enrollment status while also demonstrating the College's monitoring of programmatic interests and successful completion or transfer. Other factors that affect institutional planning include

employment, housing and food security, transportation, wellness, and other aspects of daily life that affect students' motivation and ability to enroll in college. Examples of resources that aid planning follow:

- National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) Executive Report and findings for Fall 2021 and Fall 2023
- Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) report on Michigan households (2024 update and HFC data sheet)
- Projection of most in-demand occupations in Michigan through 2030
- Environmental scanning (e.g., Emerging Trends for July 2023 , August 2023 , and October 2023 and compilation of sources)
- Basic needs analysis for AY 2023-2024
- HFC Student Financial Wellness Survey, Fall 2023 (report and infographic)
- Local demographics (students by high school)

The College monitors its enrollment patterns and identifies factors that may affect enrollment, clearly aligning with priority 1 (access) of the 2022-2024 and 2025-2027 Strategic Plans . Approximately 60% of students are from outside the district. In Wayne County, from which the College draws, the Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino populations greatly exceed those in Dearborn. (According to the U.S. Census Bureau , the in-district population is 4% Black/African American and 3% Hispanic/Latino; Wayne County is 37% Black/African American and 7% Hispanic/Latino.) Therefore, the College has made concerted efforts to increase those student populations. Per the 2024-2025 IPEDS 12-Month Enrollment, HFC enrollment was 14.5% Black/African American and 3.7% Hispanic/Latino out of a total unduplicated count of 15,749. As discussed in sub-criterion 3.G, progress toward attaining the Strategic Plan's access goals has been limited.

IRBI supports access efforts by supplying data tools, including a daily-updated Live Enrollment Dashboard that enables race/ethnicity tracking and future goal-setting capabilities. Additionally, IRBI provides detailed feeder school analyses to inform recruitment strategies (see student enrollment by high school and percent growth by high school). These data guide the Admissions and Recruiting team to target high-yield, diverse schools, especially out of district.

The Detroit Promise Program provides a pathway to increase diversity (see sub-criterion 3.D). It offers last-dollar scholarships and support services for eligible Detroit graduates, a city whose population is 77% Black or African American and 8% Hispanic or Latino. Enrollment analysis of students from Detroit reveals the importance of such support. HFC leads local community colleges in enrollment through this program (Detroit Promise enrollment data for two-year colleges). Continued evaluation of this initiative will be central to advancing student access and meeting future diversity goals.

The College is taking other steps as well, including hiring a Spanish-speaking admissions recruiter, making on-campus recruiting more effective by offering a wrap-around experience, strengthening community outreach and relationships with priority and opportunity schools, and tailoring marketing campaigns and website materials to these populations (see sampling of marketing materials). The recent hire of a new Director of Admissions and Recruiting supports development of a strategic, metrics-oriented recruiting plan that aligns with the College's strategic plan and

ongoing assessment of the department's work.

Student retention and success

For effective planning, the College strives to identify both aids and barriers to student success. Retention is measured primarily by first-year credit accumulation, segmented by full-time and part-time status, as well as fall-to-winter and fall-to-fall enrollment rates. According to the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP), HFC ranks between the 68th and the 83rd percentile nationally in retention performance. However, NCCBP data also show that credit momentum lags despite strong reenrollment rates (NCCBP retention momentum). IRBI monitors retention through dashboards disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, Pell eligibility, age, and enrollment status (see retention dashboard).

In alignment with priority 2 in the 2022-2024 and 2025-2027 Strategic Plan , IRBI analyzed factors that may affect student retention. This retention study (see retention modeling results , executive summary , and presentation on retention factors) focused on three cohorts of degree-seeking, first-time students: those who began in Fall 2021, Fall 2022, or Fall 2023. It concluded, "These findings highlight the importance of early academic performance, financial aid status, and continued academic progress throughout the first year in predicting student retention. The significant retention gaps among certain ethnic groups, particularly Black/African American students, emphasize the need for targeted support strategies to improve equity in retention outcomes."

Building on this exploratory analysis, IRBI intends to validate the Fall 2025 results by comparing them to the actual Fall 2024-Fall 2025 data. Then recommendations will be shared more broadly with Advising and Academic Affairs.

Another study explores the effect of a student's being flagged in a class as "Never Attended" (see NA policy and presentation). This study shows that earning an NA grade significantly reduces retention and completion. It also demonstrates how academic probation and first-year course completion for first-time, degree-seeking students affect retention.

In addition to these institutional studies, student support services are evaluated for their impact on student retention and success. Examples follow:

- Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) Student Activities Final Report
- CAS Library Final Report
- IRBI's presentation to Advising (investigating the effect of registration timing and NA grades and summarizing feedback from 2022, 2023, and 2024 HFC graduates who participated in student success focus groups, also discussed below)
- Presentation to Student Services: Student voices on success

Individually, HFC graduates have provided important insights into the student experience and factors related to student success. Now in its third year, the August 2024 Student Success Panel report contains feedback from students who graduated in the Fall 2023 and Winter 2024 terms. Findings reveal that students related their success largely to development of personal traits (such as time management skills and persistence) and strong institutional and peer support.

Institutional shortfalls included feelings of exclusion by nontraditional students and students of color as well as some challenges related to communication and comprehensive knowledge of student support resources. The report made several recommendations to address these obstacles. While focus groups in Winter 2024 (see Student Voices Final Report) involved a very limited number of students, they still provided valuable feedback that delved more deeply into the kinds of support that may benefit nontraditional students, microaggressions that contributed to feelings of exclusion, and examples of poor communication. These focus groups also discussed the impact that gender, race, sexual orientation, and cultural expectations have on education and career decisions. Based on these results, IRBI recommended evaluating the adequacy of course availability and support services for adult students, educating the College community about microaggressions, and striving to resolve communication challenges in rollouts of new technologies such as Ellucian Advise and the College's updated website.

The Advising Office illustrates how qualitative and quantitative evidence is used to make substantial improvements. As noted above, students state that effective communication and guidance are essential to registration, retention, satisfaction, and success, but they found the College lacking. Changes in the Advising Office sought to address such weaknesses. To increase efficiency and reduce student confusion or frustration, communication was streamlined, a centralized process for responding to emails was developed, and paper-based forms were digitized. In addition, drop-in advising services were expanded, staff was added, and the Advising satisfaction surveys received by students were revised to be more useful. Subsequently, long-term structural and procedural improvements included implementing a comprehensive onboarding and training process, upgrading technology to reduce wait times and to enable proactive outreach and personalized advising, digitizing and clarifying the academic probation process, and enhancing the Early Alert process. The Fall 2024 Advising Progress Final Report and August 2025 addendum provide additional information, accomplishments, and future plans.

Completion and transfer rates are tracked by the College as critical indicators of student success in the Strategic Plan (priority 3 and priority 4). As discussed in sub-criterion 3.G, HFC has been successful. These achievements may be attributed to data-informed, targeted interventions, such as the Auto Award process (sub-criterion 3.G) and other actions described in sub-criteria 3.A and 3.D as well as IRBI's monitoring of transfer outcomes via the National Student Clearinghouse (see student transfer destinations). One intervention that grew out of the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan is the Within Reach Initiative, which initially focused on a full-time FTIAC cohort of actively enrolled students who were either just a few credits shy of earning an associate degree or who already had enough credits to receive one. Advisors contacted those students to encourage and facilitate completion within the 150% time frame required for inclusion in the institution's IPEDS graduation rate. This initiative has expanded. Advisors now provide intensive, proactive outreach to all FTIAC students who are within their 150% window for completion (approximately 1,200 students per year). Progress towards completion within the time frame is monitored and encouraged from their first semester on.

Academic Operations and Analytics

Holistic planning promotes efficiency and effectiveness. To that end, the Vice President of Academic Affairs requested the purchase of Coursedog, a single platform that integrates

academic operations and analytics. (See Board Report 4756 , the FY 2025 Operational Plan , and sub-criterion 3.A.) This platform will coordinate several functions to optimize course offerings, scheduling, curriculum management, and assessment, which have operated under several independent systems.

The College has been transitioning to Coursedog in stages to enable stakeholder involvement, training, and troubleshooting before going live. The Implementation Administration Oversight Team and cross-representational Functional User Groups have been critical to this transition. The platform was launched in August 2025, along with a Sharepoint site that provides information, resources, and system access. End-user training is planned for Fall 2025. Community engagement has included the following:

- Emails from the Vice President of Academic Affairs (February 27, 2025 , and March 26, 2025).
- “Campus conversations” on academic scheduling and curriculum management (which were also recorded and shared).
- Presentations to the Curriculum Committee (February 3, 2025, minutes , pp. 27-28, and March 17, 2025, minutes and presentation) and Faculty Senate, after which the Coursedog curriculum workflow was amended.
- a community update at the August 19, 2025, State of the College.

Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Argument

Consistent with its mission, the College engages in evidence-based planning and decision-making, which is supported by the Institutional Research and Business Intelligence department. Collaborative administrative and shared governance structures have enabled HFC to thrive, even when confronting challenges such as the pandemic and changes in leadership. Strategic and operational planning and fiscal monitoring and reporting practices enable the College to balance short-term and long-term needs and ensure sustainability, adaptability, and public accountability. Service to both students and the community remains central to budgeting, planning, and other activities.