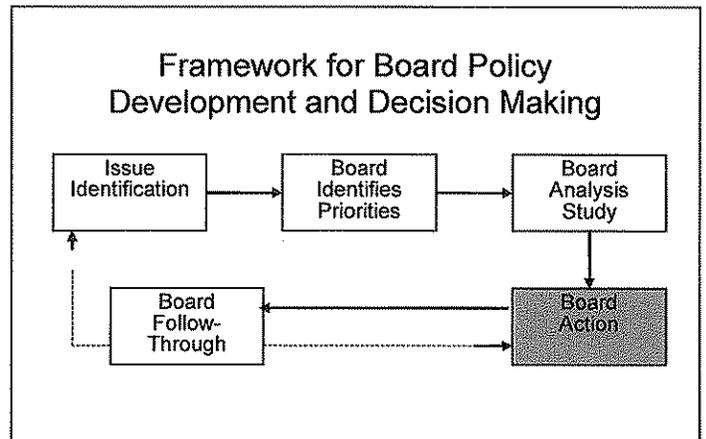


# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

August 7, 2014



- Agenda Item:** Indian Hills Community College (IHCC) Comprehensive Accreditation Report—Fiscal Year 2014
- Iowa Goal:** Individuals will pursue postsecondary education in order to drive economic success
- State Board Role/Authority:** Iowa Code section 260C.47(3) grants authority to the State Board of Education to determine whether the programs of a community college shall remain accredited.
- Presenters:** Jeremy Varner, Administrator  
Division of Community Colleges  
  
Kent Farver, Chief  
Bureau of Community Colleges
- Attachments:** 1
- Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board grant continued accreditation for IHCC. A state compliance accreditation evaluation will be conducted in fiscal year 2018.
- Background:** This is a report of the evaluation of IHCC for continued state accreditation as an associate degree-granting institution. The Department of Education (DE) conducted the on-site portion of the evaluation on April 15-17, 2014. The findings reflect the work of the accreditation team’s comprehensive review of IHCC.
- IHCC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a commission of the North Central Association. The state accreditation process reviews state requirements but does not duplicate the HLC process. HLC documentation is reviewed during the visit to identify any follow up that may be required. State standards are reviewed through a structured process by DE staff and community college peer reviewers.



***Final Accreditation Report  
Comprehensive State Evaluation***

***Indian Hills Community College***

***April 15-17, 2014***



**COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

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State of Iowa  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

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**Accreditation Team  
Indian Hills Community College  
Comprehensive Accreditation Evaluation  
April 15-17, 2014**

**Accreditation Team Members**

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# **Indian Hills Community College (IHCC)**

## **State Accreditation Evaluation**

### **Conducted FY 2014**

#### Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the review was a scheduled accreditation evaluation of Indian Hills Community College (IHCC) conducted on April 15-17, 2014, by the Iowa Department of Education as mandated by Iowa Code, Section 260C.47.

### **Institutional Overview**

#### College History

IHCC was established as Merged Area XV by the Iowa Board of Public Instruction on June 3, 1966. The college began operations on July 1, 1966, at the Ottumwa Regional Airport under the governance of a nine-member board of trustees. Then known as Iowa Tech-Area XV Community College, the college conducted technical programs that included those formerly operated by the Ottumwa Community School District. The newly-renovated North Campus (formerly known as the "Airport Campus") is where the college's Aviation Maintenance Technology, Aviation Pilot Training, Welding Technology, Commercial Driver Training, and Automotive Collision Technology programs are currently taught. The campus covers 215 acres and is located seven miles northwest of Ottumwa.

On July 1, 1968, the Merged Area XV Board assumed responsibilities for operations of Centerville Junior College, which had been established by the Centerville Community School Board in 1930. The Indian Hills Centerville Campus was completed in 1970 on a 72-acre site in the northwest part of the community. Programs at the Centerville Campus include Arts and Sciences courses, Construction Technology, Sustainable Agriculture and Entrepreneurship, Practical Nursing, and Associated Degree Nursing programs.

The boards of IHCC and Ottumwa Heights College merged operations on July 1, 1979. Ottumwa Heights was a private college operated by the Sisters of Humility of Mary. Its roots can be traced back to the 1860s, when the Visitation Academy was established in Ottumwa. The St. Joseph Academy was founded in 1925, and its name was changed to Ottumwa Heights College five years later. The Ottumwa Heights College campus was situated on 126 acres and was purchased by the IHCC's Board of Trustees in 1981, becoming the IHCC Ottumwa Campus.

Since 1981, the IHCC Ottumwa Campus has experienced many facility renovations and the development of new facilities to house academic programs and to improve the overall student experience. The Advanced Technology Center was completed in the fall of 1990. The 125,000-square-foot building houses the college's many technical programs. The Rural Health Education Center opened in May 2007 on the Ottumwa Campus as a classroom and laboratory building for the college's health programs as well as a conference and meeting facility for area health care organizations. IHCC completed renovations in 2013 to the Tom Arnold Net Center, home of the IHCC volleyball team and

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year-round recreation to students and residents of Ottumwa and the surrounding area. The college is currently renovating the Rosenman Video Conferencing and Training Center to accommodate the growth of its health sciences programs.

### **Institutional Profile**

Indian Hills Community College (IHCC) is a comprehensive two-year degree granting institution accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. IHCC offers 77 academic programs at its three campuses: Ottumwa Main Campus, Ottumwa North Campus, and Centerville Campus. The college extends services to all 10 counties in its region through the operation of eight county service centers and four regional career academies.

During 2013, IHCC enrolled 6,946 students in degrees leading to university transfer and preparation for the workforce. IHCC ranked third among Iowa's 15 community colleges in credentials awarded, graduation rate, and overall student success. While the college's career and technical education (CTE) enrollment (3,667 students) exceeds its arts and sciences enrollment (2,852 students), IHCC ranked second in university transfer rate.

IHCC has invested in the development of online and distance education opportunities. During 2013, 61 percent of students enrolled in at least one distance education course and the college offered 1,598 high school students the opportunity to receive concurrent enrollment credit. IHCC extends customized training and special interest non-credit learning to area residents. The college enrolled 16,150 students in non-credit customized training in 2013.

## **Assurance Summary State Standards**

### **Compliance with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criteria**

The state accreditation team reviewed the most recent report and information from the HLC available at the time of the evaluation. IHCC's letter of accreditation by the HLC was reviewed, and IHCC has continuing accreditation.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

### **Compliance with Additional State Standards**

#### **Faculty (Qualifications)**

All community college-employed instructors who are under contract as of July 1, 2011, who teach in CTE or arts and sciences (including adjuncts) are required to meet minimum faculty standards (Iowa Code, Section 260C.48). A department accreditation team member reviewed a random sample of faculty human resources files to ensure compliance with the standard.

**Finding:** There were multiple instructors in the sample whose credentials did not meet state minimum faculty standards. The college has pledged to review and address its process for verifying faculty qualifications. The department provided recommendations

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for changes to college procedures. In the spring of 2015, the department will conduct another review to ensure that this process is functioning as required.

### **Faculty Teaching Load**

The teaching loads of full-time instructors must not exceed the faculty load limits set forth in Iowa law. This is the case for CTE instructors, as well as for college parallel (arts and sciences) instructors (Iowa Code, Section 260C.48). A department accreditation team member reviewed the instructional loads of a random sample of full-time faculty to ensure compliance with the standard.

**Finding:** There were multiple instructors in the sample who exceeded state faculty load limits. In the spring of 2015, the department will conduct another review to ensure the issue has been corrected.

### **Special Needs**

Community colleges are required to maintain equal access in recruitment, enrollment, and placement activities for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities must be given access to the full range of course offerings at a college through reasonable accommodations. Accreditation team members reviewed marketing/recruitment publications and information on the college's ADA (Americans' with Disabilities Act) policies and reports. Team members also conducted interviews with staff involved with disabilities services.

**Finding:** The college's ADA/non-discrimination statement did not include all required protected classes. The statement lacked consistency among various publications. The college pledged to address this issue and make the appropriate corrections. The DE will be providing guidance on the ADA/non-discrimination statement this summer to all community colleges.

### **CTE Program Evaluations and Timelines**

There are a variety of state requirements related to the offering of CTE programs. The standards are included in Iowa Code, Chapter 258, 281—IAC 46.7(4), and 281—IAC 24.5(4). Standards for CTE programs include numerous requirements related to program and award length, program content, labor market demand, articulation, advisory committees, and more. All CTE programs (including both new programs and changes to existing programs) must be approved by the department.

The department maintains a database of approved programs for this purpose. Standards for CTE programs are included in the *Program Approval: Guidelines for Iowa Community Colleges* on the department's website. Additionally, community colleges are required to review at least 20 percent of the institution's CTE programs annually.

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The department reviews and approves institutional CTE program review processes through the state accreditation process. Standards for CTE program review are included in the guidelines for program approval on the department website. The accreditation team members reviewed information on CTE program evaluations.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

### **Strategic Planning**

Community colleges are required to update their strategic plans at least every five years as a guide for the community and its decision-making (Iowa Code, Section 256.31(4) (a)). Team members reviewed the college's most recent strategic plan and interviewed selected staff.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

### **Physical Plant and Facilities**

Each community college must present evidence of adequate planning, including a board-approved facilities plan. The community college's facilities must meet state and federal requirements as outlined in the state accreditation guide. The team reviewed the facilities plan and conducted a brief walk-through of parts of the administrative campus.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

### **Quality Faculty Plan (QFP)**

Iowa law establishes the process for community colleges to plan for the hiring and professional development of faculty. Institutional QFPs are required to meet the standards of 281—IAC 24.5(5). The accreditation team reviewed the plan and asked members of the institution's QFP committee follow-up questions.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

### **Senior Year Plus (SYP) Programs and Data**

There are a variety of requirements for SYP programs offered to high school students jointly enrolled in community college. These requirements are included in Iowa Code, Chapter 261E. Currently, the department utilizes the National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnership's (NACEP) accreditation process to ensure compliance with many statutory requirements (legislated Postsecondary Course Audit Committee). The accreditation team reviewed the college's accreditation status with NACEP, interviewed selected staff, and reviewed additional documentation.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

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**Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Issues Identified during Previous State Accreditation Evaluation**—During the last comprehensive evaluation at IHCC, the review found instructors who had loads above the state faculty load requirements. The current review has noted this as a finding. The department will conduct another review of faculty load in the spring of 2015 to verify that the college has implemented a system that is effective in ensuring compliance with these requirements.

## **Continuous Improvement Summary**

### **Summary of Key Practices**

IHCC, an institution of higher learning, is dedicated to excellence in educational opportunity, economic development, cultural understanding, and social enrichment. Student learning is the central unifying purpose of the college. The following key initiatives are continuous improvement initiatives that have been identified in IHCC's Strategic Plan and annual Plans for Excellence.

### **College Completion Initiative**

In an effort to increase completion rates college-wide, IHCC established a Completion Committee in 2012 to examine completion issues and find solutions. The committee has identified seven completion priorities, including three that IHCC will focus on implementing over the next year. These three priorities are: 1) implementation of mandatory testing; 2) development of mandatory orientation college-wide; and 3) continued support and implementation of developmental education redesign.

### **One Stop Integrated Student Service Center**

On July 1, 2013, IHCC opened the One Stop Integrated Student Center in the Bennett Student Services Building. The college remodeled space and co-located services that students in the past have had to seek in multiple locations on-campus. This new model has proved to be more effective and efficient for new and current students seeking assistance with registration, financial aid and billing.

### **Pothoven Academic Success Center**

During August 2013, IHCC opened the Pothoven Academic Success Center. Following a generous donation by Board Chair John Pothoven, IHCC remodeled and co-located free academic support services to students. Services include tutoring, supplemental instruction, developmental education, disability services, and access to computer labs.

### **Scholarship Support for Students**

The IHCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization that receives contributions to provide academic scholarships. All students enrolling at IHCC are eligible to apply for these scholarships. The foundation receives tremendous support within the 10-county service area. For the past nine years, all of IHCC's full-time employees have contributed to the scholarship fund. Hundreds of area businesses, organizations, industries and citizens also contribute each year.

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In recent years, the foundation has received an increased number of trusts and memorials, and the value of the endowment is \$23.5 million. Nearly 17,000 scholarships have been awarded to IHCC students since 1975. Last year, 552 students at IHCC received nearly \$1.1 million in foundation scholarships.

### **Constituent Relationship Management**

IHCC is in the process of implementing a Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) system to develop more effective communication to prospective students, students enrolled at the college, and alumni. The CRM system will allow the college to tailor communication to constituent groups to create additional awareness of academic, social, and cultural activities available to students at IHCC.

### **Assessment Forums**

IHCC is dedicated to assisting faculty in the assessment of student learning outcomes and program improvement. Assessment forums are held quarterly with program faculty groups and discipline faculty groups and the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Institutional Research Specialist. Assessment Forums are discussions in which specific program or discipline faculty explain their assessment data, analysis of that data, written reports and improvement steps based on the assessment data. Data summaries, analysis reports and action steps are electronically recorded and stored in files on the IHCC "common drive" that allows faculty and academic administrators to access and review the information at any time.

### **Program Review**

Annually, IHCC reviews one-third of academic through the program review process. Each academic program being reviewed completes a self-study and presentation to the IHCC Executive Council. Program directors and faculty are required to report assessment strategies and results for program level student learning outcomes and assessment data. Executive Council, academic administrators and faculty use the assessment of student learning data as one criterion by which to evaluate the health and success of a program. If student success in a program is deemed to be unacceptable, changes in curriculum, staffing, student experiences are considered. Additionally, Executive Council members tour labs to review needs for capital improvements and equipment.

### **My Learning Plan**

IHCC's Quality Faculty Planning (QFP) Committee selected My Learning Plan during 2014 to become the college's tracking system for faculty professional development activities. Currently, the college utilizes a paper-based approval process and the tracking system is completed through an Access database. My Learning Plan will eliminate the paper-based system with all approvals completed electronically. Additionally, faculty will have access at any time to their professional development records. Full implementation of My Learning Plan is scheduled for fall 2014.

### **Regional Economic Advancement (REA) Division**

Established in 2011, The Regional Economic Advancement (REA) Division strives: *"To improve the economic conditions of the Indian Hills Region through continuous learning, innovation, entrepreneurship, collaboration and visionary leadership."*

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The following are the four main components of the REA: 1) Advanced Technologies, which houses all of IHCC's career and technical education programs (except health occupations). This division, along with health occupations, trains the future workforce of IHCC's region and beyond; 2) A Career One-Stop (IowaWORKS) made up of Iowa Workforce Development, WIA (Workforce Investment Act), Promise Jobs, and Vocational Rehabilitation. This part of the division provides support and services to unemployed and underemployed workers; 3) The Rural Entrepreneurship and Leadership Initiative (RELI), which is designed to facilitate a myriad of leadership training opportunities throughout IHCC's 10-county region. RELI staff also provides supportive services to budding entrepreneurs and encourages entrepreneurial ventures in the IHCC region; and 4) Customized Learning, which provides continuing education opportunities for individuals and customized training programs for local business and industry.

### **Rural Health Education Partnership (RHEP)**

The Rural Health Education Partnership consists of over 100 partnered organizations that provide healthcare or emergency services in southeast Iowa. The partnership acts as a way for these organizations to network and combine efforts and ideas to meet the continuing education needs of their employees. One of RHEP's main functions is to develop, coordinate and distribute quality educational programs to healthcare and emergency services personnel. These courses help meet the needs of professionals who must continually attend training in order to maintain their licenses and support professional growth. RHEP processes continuing education courses for over 1,000 students annually and has developed approximately 150 different classes. Examples of RHEP's offerings include:

*Continuing Education Courses* designed specifically for firefighters, funeral directors, emergency medical services, social workers, physical therapists and nursing, among others. In addition to offering these courses on IHCC's campuses, RHEP can bring any of these courses directly to employers.

*Certificate Programs*, including Activity Coordinator, Fire Service Outreach Programs, Licensed Practical Nurse Expanded IV Therapy, Medication Aide, Medication Manager, Nurse Aide, and Phlebotomy and Rehabilitation/Restorative Aide.

### **Non-Accreditation State or Federal Requirements**

No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## **Evaluation Team Recommendations**

The state accreditation team recommends continued accreditation for Indian Hills Community College (IHCC). A state interim accreditation evaluation is scheduled for the 2018 fiscal year.